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COLLECTION
OF
ANCIENT AND MODERN
BRITISH AUTHORS.

VOL. CCCLXXXI.

EVA, A TRUE STORY.
THE SEA CAPTAIN, A DRAMA.
MONEY, A COMEDY.

(Burlingame)



PRINTED BY J. SMITH, 14 BIS, RUE FONTAINE-AU-ROI.

EVA,

A TRUE STORY OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS;

THE ILL-OMENED MARRIAGE,

227

AND

OTHER TALES AND POEMS.

BY SIR EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, BART.

AUTHOR OF "EUGENE ARAM," "RIENZI," ETC.



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PREFACE.

IN regarding the general mould and spirit of our more recent poetry, nothing is more obvious than that, while the works of Byron and Scott still command the circulation which is the surest token of their popularity with the reading Many, the imitators of their peculiar attributes have gradually passed away;—yielding to the influence which Wordsworth and Shelley have, year by year, more and more visibly exercised upon the poetical taste and temper of the rhyming Few.

But while, on the one hand, the pure and devotional spirit of Wordsworth has often served to elevate the tone of the disciples to whose reverence he is so justly entitled—while, on the other, the more ornate and dazzling genius of Shelley has often lighted his followers to daring and original beauties of imagery and expression,—it may be a question how far the admiration of either poet has not tended to the separation of Poetry itself from that Popular Audience it was once wont to command. In Shelley abstract Imagination, in Wordsworth serene Philosophy predominates; and with those whom the genius of either pervades and colours, imagination not unfrequently passes into phantasy, and philosophy into musing;—while it may, perhaps, be conceded that the splendour of the one, the simplicity of the other, has led, by different paths, to the common result of quaintness

and affectation of style—often disguising from the common reader the extraordinary merits by which, in their brilliant disciples, such defects are contrasted and atoned.

Undoubtedly, if the Author had the inclination, he has not the power, to attempt a rivalry with contemporaries, whom the love of these “two masters of eternal song” has conducted to a reputation too hardly won not to be endeared to those who can sympathize with the struggles of genius against the time, and value efforts for the elevation of the human intellect into that noblest region over which Poetry presides, without reference to the fallacious test of the day’s applause.

The Poems now submitted to the public have been chiefly composed with a more humble ambition, and in a class of poetry, eminently national, indeed, but long neglected and disused;—a poetry demanding neither “the ethereal thought” of Wordsworth, nor the “mighty line” of Shelley—a poetry addressing itself rather to the heart than the intellect, and seeking appeals to familiar emotion in succinct and simple narrative or direct and positive picture.*

* As (if the Author may be pardoned for illustrating the distinction he here takes) in the one view, have been composed—the tales of “Eva,” “The Ill-omened Marriage,” “Bayard,” “The Fairy Bride,” &c.—in the other, such poems as “Mazarin,” “André Chenier,” “The Dead Queen,” &c. A few of the poems in the volume, do not, of course, come under either of these heads.

One word about the longest tale in this collection, “The Ill-omened Marriage.” Those accustomed to imagine that the spirit of our ancient Poets is only caught by the imitation of their phraseology or diction, may little understand the Author when he states, that it was to the study of some of the earliest poems, which pleased our Norman and Saxon Fathers, that a

Without affecting to escape some portion of that mannerism of style which must, more or less, pervade all works of the same age, however differing in quality or degree, and from which the violent effort to free ourselves only tends to distortion and extravagance,— the Author must confess that his own taste and theories of composition rather incline him to laws and usages of versification and diction from which the younger Poets of the present day seem to make it a merit to depart. Perhaps, however, if there be anything original in the mind and conceptions of a writer, no matter whether the medium employed be verse or prose, it will place its own stamp upon his labours, not the less from the absence of all *struggle* for originality in the outward and verbal mechanism: For the thought is the Muse, the Versification but her dress.

It is impossible for the writer not to be fully aware of all the disadvantages under which he labours, in the hazard he now adventures,—not only in common with his more gifted brethren in the practical and busy character of the times,—but in the natural reluctance, even tale of modern character and life, conveyed in the language of modern times, owes its origin. For the poems referred to, such as “The Grey Palfrey,” “Griselda,” &c., take their interest from appeals to simple and domestic feelings, in the course of a narrative characterized by the manners and habits of the time in which it was composed. Such poems are, in fact, [what the “Ill-omened Marriage” aims at being,] *Domestic Novels, in Verse*, rather than members of the larger class of *Romaunt* or *Ballad*. For a tale of this kind, adapted to our own age, a certain variety of style, that may often seem abrupt in its changes, is perhaps no less requisite in verse than in prose. And for whatever may at first seem unfamiliar in this peculiarity, the candid Reader will no doubt make sufficient allowance.

of the Impartial, to allow merit in Verse, to one whom they have been long accustomed to meet in the less lofty element of Prose;—a reluctance strengthened and justified by the remembrance of the worthless rhymings of his youth, for which (it may be in vain, and unheeded) his manhood offers this atonement. And yet, whatever be the fate of this volume (the labour of his love)—if censure now and neglect hereafter, the Author can never regret that brief return into earlier and happier life which it is the privilege of Poetry to bestow. The flower of every man's mind is the poetical part of it; and this slight publication, whatever its demerits, comprises in itself the ripest and less imperfect forms yet vouchsafed to *him*, whom, at least, it has often beguiled and soothed,—of the fancies or ideas which make the calm, Philosophers, and the restless—only Authors!

May 1, 1842.

NOTE.—If it be necessary to apologize for not having placed the longer Poems, from which the Volume takes its title, in due and customary order at the commencement, the author can give no better excuse, than that derived from the feeling of dread and reluctance with which he himself, no doubt in common with many others, has always encountered a series of long poems at the very onset of a volume, by a Poet in whose genius he has not perfect confidence,—whereas, if not displeased by the foretaste of a few poems of less formidable aspect, the Reader, growing gradually accustomed to the Author, glides, peradventure, unawares, into the attention he might have refused to give to the presumption of a direct and lengthened demand upon it.

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MAZARIN.

(THE WORLD WITHOUT.)

I WAS walking some days after, in the new apartments of his palace. I recognised the approach of the Cardinal (Mazarin) by the sound of his slippered feet, which he dragged one after the other, as a man enfeebled by a mortal malady. I concealed myself behind the tapestry, and I heard him say—" *Il faut quitter tout cela!*" (I must leave all that!) He stopped at every step, for he was very feeble, and casting his eyes on each object that attracted him, he sighed forth, as from the bottom of his heart, "*Il faut quitter tout cela!* What pains have I taken to acquire these things! Can I abandon them without regret? I shall never see them more where I am about to go!" &c.—*Mémoires inédits de Louis Henri, comte de Brienne. Barrière's Edition, vol ii. p. 115.*

It was a vaulted gallery, where, in long and gleaming rows,
The statues stood like gods, whose life is glory and—repose;
And on the walls the canvass glowed from many a gorgeous
frame;

What misers are we to the toil, what spendthrifts to the name!
Through silent air, with silver light, the steadfast tapers shone
Upon the Painter's pomp of hues, the Sculptor's solemn stone.
Saved from the flood of Time, within that Ark ye seem'd to view
The Sons of Art's departed world, the Fathers of its new.
Along that gallery feebly sounds a footfall on the floor,—
The old and dying man is come to count his treasures o'er;—
An old and dying Man amidst the ever-living Art;
God's truth! it were a sight to stir some pining painter's heart;
It were a sight to lift the soul of Genius from the Hour,
To see the life of Genius smile upon the death of Power!
That old and dying man is lord of all his eyes survey,
That meagre hand as yet can sign a thousand lives away;
The Roman purple hides the worm that gnaws the heart within,
And Church and State, he guides them both, the puissant
Mazarin!

Yet more than Church, and more than State, the Italian
prized, I fear,

The Art in which his Mother-Land yet murmured to his ear.
So, with a feeble footfall, now, he crawls along the floor,
A dying man, who ere he dies, would count his treasures o'er.
And from the sunny landscape smiled the soul of sweet Lorraine,
And from the deeps of Raphael rose celestial Love again ;
And, bright in gorgeous-coloured pomp, the haggard owner
sees

Thy banquet-halls and cloth of gold, thou stately Veronese.
While calm and stern amidst the blaze of wonders not their own,
The gods of Greece stand group'd around their old Olympian's
throne.

There, Hermes ever seems from earth on winged feet to rise ;—
There, ever in the Serpent's fold Laocoon deathless dies ;
There, startled from her forest-lair, young Dian turns to draw
The arrowy death that waits the heart the god has fail'd to awe.
There, earth subdued, the monster slain, and every labour done,
Stands, sad as Worth with mortal fame, Alcmena's mournful
son.*

They gaze upon the fading form with mute immortal eyes ;
The neighbour of the charnel girt with strangers from the skies.
And slowly as he tottered by, the old man, unresign'd,
Sigh'd forth, " And must I die, and leave this pleasant world
behind ;

My power, my state, my wealth, my pomp, my galleries and
my halls?"

Still, while he sigh'd, th' Eternal Art smiled on him from
the walls.

And as at last the dying man crept feebly to the porch,
He saw the Silent Genius† stand, and lower the darken'd torch!

* Aristotle classes Hercules amongst the melancholy (Arist. Prob. 30).
And it is the expression of melancholy repose combined with colossal power
which gives so sublime a sentiment to the Farnese statue.

† The statue of the Greek Genius of Death.

ANDRÉ CHENIER.

(THE WORLD WITHIN.)

ANDRÉ CHENIER, the original of whatever is truest to nature and genuine passion in the modern poetry of France, died by the guillotine, July 27, 1794. In ascending the scaffold he cried—“*To die so young !*”—“*And there was something here !*” he added, striking his forehead, not in the fear of death, but the despair of genius !—See THIERS, vol. iv. p. 83.

It was within the prison's gloom, the dreary night before
 The morn in which the dungeon earth shall wall the soul no
 more,
 And there, alone, the musing man whom Power had doom'd
 to die,
 In silence fill'd the cell with dreams of happy days gone by.
 On blacken'd walls and rugged floors, and through the sullen
 bars,
 With eyes that spoke of heavenly things, soft shone the
 summer stars.
 Fair to the martyr-poet's gaze, within that iron gloom,
 The Eden lost on earth arose in melody and bloom.
 To grace those walls he needed not the canvass and the stone,
 A god itself, his GENIUS saw Olympus round its throne ;
 The visions Poets only know took living shape, and smil'd
 Upon the sentenced captive, as upon the cradled child.
 He saw the long procession sweep of those sublimer things
 Which Youth had hoped that Time should raise from Song's
 enchanted springs,—
 Those forms of light that from the lyre and from the poet's
 hymn,
 As from a native heaven break forth—melodious seraphim !*

* “ Aus den Saiten, wie aus ihren Himmeln
 Neugebor 'ne Seraphim.”—SCHILLER.

So there, forgetful of the morn, upon the dungeon floor
 He sate, the doomed man, to count the wealth of genius o'er—
 To count the kingly hoards of thought, majestic and sublime,
 That lay—if God would spare the life—within the mines of time.
 He sees the work that should outlive the marble and the hues
 On which for many a weary year has toil'd the holy muse.
 He sees it rise to ripen'd shape, a Venus from the sea,
 And to another form from heaven Devotion bends the knee.
 He sees his statue rear'd amidst the hero-gods of fame;
 He hears the crowd, with countless tongues, repeat the poet's
 name ;

He hears the maid, amidst the shades of many a violet vale,
 With murmur'd songs his lips had breathed make sweet the
 twilight gale ;—

He hears the loved of earlier hours exulting in his praise,
 And lives the life that Glory lives, and sleeps beneath the bays.
 Then, starting from the glowing dreams, he saw athwart the
 bars

The sullen dawn that chased alike from thought and heaven
 the stars ;

He heard the busy tramp below, the slow-unclosing doors,
 The gaoler's heavy tread along the melancholy floors ;
 The murmur of the crowds that round the human shambles
 throng ;

The death-cart's groaning wheel, as harsh the horror grates
 along.

“ And must I die so soon ! ” sigh'd forth the young man, un-
 resign'd,

“ And leave this pleasant world before a name is left behind ?
 I feel the glorious SOMETHING stir within my burning brain,
 That tells me what my life *could* be—a prophet, and in vain !
 My power, my state—my realm, more fair than monarch
 ever sway'd—

The splendours of that world in time my rushing soul sur-
 vey'd,—”

And while he spoke, the hinges creak'd—the gaoler oped the door—

“Come forth, and greet the sun ; the night—thy last on earth
—is o'er !”

BAYARD.

A TALE.

SEE, for the *naïve* and characteristic relation of the anecdote on which this poem is founded, (and which one of our standard essayists, “The Guardian,” No. 17, has already made familiar to the reader,) “The right joyous and pleasant history of the Chevalier Bayard,” by the Loyal Servant, vol. ii. p. 126 of the Translation published by Murray. The very slight alterations which have been here admitted, are solely in compliance with what the Author believes to be an imperative condition in the art, whether of poet or painter—viz., an avoidance of the literal fact.

Love oftimes in the haughtiest knight
His easiest conquest sees ;
The plume that leads the foremost fight,
The toy to every breeze.

More fair than rose at dawning day,
When May her Zephyr seeks,
The blossom of the human May,
The rose on virgin cheeks.

If Love has charms, why wealth has power—
Her sire the slave of gold.
Alas ! that for the glittering shower
The Danaë should be sold !

She stood before him at the night,
Unfriended and alone ;
And o'er her charms the tempting light
From silver cressets shone.

She stood ;—above her bosom's snow
The modest hands were prest,
And voiceless heaved, in ebb and flow,
The deeps within the breast.

She stood ;—the ivory shoulders down
The glittering tresses stray'd,
Like light that from a martyr's crown
A halo round her made.

So fair a form in holy cell
No saint, I ween, might see ;
And o'er that form his glances fell,
No saint, alas, was he !*

He moved, he spoke, he knelt, he sued—
The noblest of the land ;
With gentlest words the master woo'd,
And clasp'd the victim's hand !

Then o'er the marble cheek there flush'd
The hues that went and came ;
And to the lip, in trembling, rush'd
The words of hope and shame.

“ Oh, spare me—spare, O noble knight,
The child a sire could doom,
And leave to life the stainless light
That sanctifies the tomb !

“ This morn, my eyes could greet the sun,—
Ah, shall they loathe the ray,—
To-morrow, scorn'd by every one,
Whose love approv'd to-day ?

* “ As he was no saint.”—The Loyal servant, vol. ii. p. 126.

“This morn, methought the voice of prayer
The gates of heaven could ope!—
To-morrow—oh, how prays Despair,
When nought is left for Hope?

“This morn—why should I blush to speak?—
I loved—beloved again,—
Nay—not the love that fires thy cheek,
A love that could not stain!

“This hour, unconscious, sad, alone,
His lips repeat my name;
To-day his pride—to-morrow grown,
O God, into his shame!

“Before thy thousand wreaths of bay,
One leaf how poor and dim!
A thousand flowerets glad thy way,
But *I*—am all to him!

“Turn not—oh, turn not!” From her eyes
His hands, his aspect hid;
Perchance the thought the speech denies,
The startled conscience chid.

Perchance, the haunted Past along,
The’ accusing Memory stray’d,
And woke the pale, repentant throng,
By young Desire betray’d;

Perchance, to that blest hour the birth
Of holier thoughts was given,
And wings, no more to stoop to Earth
Regained their native Heaven!

“No mail like innocence secure !*
 Await and tremble not ;
 The Angel-buckler guards the pure !”
 He said—and left the spot.

The midnight hour the church-bell toll’d,—
 O heart, more loud thy beat ;
 A step—a voice—a form—behold
 Thy lover at thy feet !

“ Look up—look up !—I claim my bride !
 The evil days are past.
 The gold my fate till now denied
 Is mine—is ours at last !

“ By Bayard’s side my father fell, —
 The son, the hero found ;
 And——” ere the rest his lips could tell,
 They heard the bugles sound ;

They heard the ringing hoofs depart ;
 Aloft the pennon flow’d ;
 And from the town, with lighter heart,
 The noble Bayard rode.

* “ Chè difesa miglior ch’usbergo e scudo,
 È la santa innocenza al petto ignudo.”

Tasso, Ger. Lib. cant. viii.—st. xli.

PATIENCE AND HOPE.

UPON a barren steep,
 Above a stormy deep,
 I saw an Angel watching the wild sea ;
 Earth was that barren steep,
 Time was that stormy deep,
 And the opposing shore, Eternity !

“ Why dost thou watch the wave?
 Thy feet the waters lave ;
 The tide engulfs thee if thou dost delay.”
 “ Unscath’d I watch the wave,
 Time not the Angel’s grave,—
 I wait until the ocean ebbs away !”

Hush’d on the Angel’s breast,
 I saw an Infant rest,
 Smiling upon the gloomy hell below.
 “ What is the Infant prest,
 O Angel, to thy breast ?”
 “ The child God gave me in the long-ago ?

“ Mine all upon the earth—
 The angel’s angel-birth,
 Smiling all terror from the howling wild !”
 — Never may I forget
 The dream that haunts me yet,
 Of PATIENCE nursing HOPE—the Angel and the Child !

EVA;

A TRUE STORY OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

THE Author has to thank an American gentleman for the beautiful story, (related also by Mr. Combe in one of his lectures,) to which this poem owes its origin.

I.

The Maiden's Home.

A COTTAGE in a peaceful vale;
 A jasmine round the door;
 A hill to shelter from the gale;
 A silver brook before.
 Oh sweet the jasmine's buds of snow,
 In mornings soft with May,
 And sweet in summer's silent glow,
 The brooklet's merry play;
 But sweeter in that lonely place
 To God it must have been,
 To see the Maiden's happy face
 That bless'd the home within!

Without the porch, you heard at noon
 A voice that sang for glee;
 Or mark'd the white neck glancing down,—
 The book upon the knee—

II.

The Idiot Boy.

Who stands between thee and the sun?—
 A cloud himself,—the Wandering One!
 A vacant wonder in the eyes,—

The mind, a blank, unwritten scroll;—
 The light was in the laughing skies,
 And darkness in the Idiot's soul.

He touched the book upon her knee—

He looked into her gentle face—
 “Thou dost not tremble, maid, to see,
 Poor Arthur by thy dwelling-place.

I know not why, but where I pass

The aged turn away;
 And if my shadow yex the grass,
 The children cease from play.

My only playmates are the wind,
 The blossom on the bough!

Why are thy looks so soft and kind?

Thou dost not tremble—thou!”

Though none were by, she trembled not—

Too meek to wound, too good to fear him;
 And, as he lingered on the spot,
 She hid the tears that gush'd to hear him.—

III.

Prayer of Arthur's Father.

“O Maiden!”—thus the sire begun—

“O Maiden, do not scorn my prayer:

I have a hapless idiot-son,

To all my wealth the only heir;

And day by day, in shine or rain,
 He wanders forth, to gaze again
 Upon those eyes, whose looks of kindness
 Still haunt him in his world of blindness.
 A sunless world!—all arts to yield
 Light to the mind from Childhood seal'd
 Have been explored in vain.
 Few are his joys on earth ;—above,
 For every ill a cure is given—
 God grant me life to cheer with love,
 The wanderer's guileless path to Heaven."
 He paused—his heart was full—" And now,
 What brings the suppliant father here ?
 Yes, few the joys that life bestows
 On him whose life is but repose—
 One night, from year to year ;—
 Yet not so dark, O maid, if thou
 Couldst bear that harmless joy to see,
 Which smiles the shadow from his face,
 When ear can catch or eye can trace
 A tone—a glimpse—of thee ;—
 The mournful presence couldst endure,
 Nor shun the steps thy looks allure,—
 Couldst"—Eva's father, from her brow
 Parted the golden locks, descending
 To veil the sweet face, downwards bending,
 And, pointing to the swimming eyes,
 The dew-drops glist'ning on the cheek,
 " Mourner !" *the happier* father cries, .
 " These tears her answer speak !"

Oh, sweet the jasmine's buds of snow,
 In mornings soft with May ;
 And sweet in summer's silent glow,
 The brooklet's merry play ;—

But sweeter, in that lonely place,
 To God it must have been
 The soul that lit the maiden's face—
 Soul watching Soul within.

IV.

The Young Teacher.

Of wonders on the land and deeps
 She spoke, and glories in the sky—
 The Eternal life the Father keeps,
 For those who learn from Him to die.
 So simply did the maiden speak—
 So simply and so earnestly,
 You saw the light begin to break,
 And soul the Heaven to see ;
 You saw how slowly, day by day,
 The darksome waters caught the ray,
 Confused and broken—come and gone—
 The beams as yet uncertain are,
 But still the billows murmur on,
 And struggle for the star.

V.

The Stranger-Suitor.

There came to Eva's maiden home
 A Stranger from a sunnier clime ;
 The lore that Hellas taught to Rome,
 The wealth that Wisdom works from Time,
 Which ever in its ebb and flow,
 Heaves to the seeker on the shore
 The waifs of glorious wrecks below—
 The argosies of yore ;—

Each gem that in that dark profound
The Past,—the Student's soul can find;
Shone from his thought, and sparkled round
The Enchanted Palace of the Mind.

In man's best years, his form was fair,
Broad brow with hyacinth locks of hair;
A port, though stately, not severe;
An eye that could the heart control;
A voice whose music to the ear,
Became a memory to the soul.
It seem'd as Nature's hand had done
Her most to mould her kingly son;
But oft beneath the sunlit Nile
The grim destroyer waits its prey,
And dark below that fatal smile,
The lurking demon lay.

How trustful in the leafy June,
She roved with him the lonely vale;
How trustful by the tender moon,
She blush'd to hear a tenderer tale.
O happy Earth! the dawn revives,
Day after day, each drooping flower—
Time to the heart *once* only gives
The joyous Morning-Hour.
“To him—oh, wilt thou pledge thy youth,
For whom the world's false bloom is o'er?
My heart shall haven in thy truth,
And tempt the faithless wave no more.

In my far land, a sun more bright
Sheds rose-hues o'er a tideless sea;
But cold the wave, and dull the light,
Without the sunshine found in thee.

Say, wilt thou come, the Stranger's bride,
 To that bright land and tideless sea?
 There is no sun but by thy side—
 My life's whole sunshine smiles in thee!"

Her hand lay trembling on his arm,
 Averted glow'd the happy face;
 A softer hue, a mightier charm,
 Grew mellowing o'er the hour—the place;
 Along the breathing woodlands moved
 A PRESENCE dream-like and divine—
 How sweet to love and be beloved,
 To lean upon a heart that's thine!
 Silence was o'er the earth and sky—
 By silence Love is answered best—
Her answer was the downcast eye,
 The rose-cheek pillow'd on his breast.
 What rustles through the moonlit brake?
 What sudden spectre meets their gaze?
 What face, the hues of life forsake,
 Gleams ghost-like in the ghostly rays?
 You might have heard his heart that beat,
 So heaving rose its heavy swell—
No more the Idiot—at her feet,
 The Dark One, roused to reason, fell.
 Loos'd the last link that thrall'd the thought,
 The lightning broke upon the blind—
 The jealous love the cure had wrought,
 The Heart in waking woke the Mind.

VI.

The Marriage.

To and fro the church bell swinging,
 Cheerily, clearly, to and fro;
 Gaily go the young girls bringing
 Flowers the fairest June may know.

Maiden, flowers that bloom'd and perished
 Strew'd thy path the bridal day ;
 May the Hope thy soul has cherished,
 Bloom when these are past away !

The Father's parting prayer is said,
 The daughter's parting kiss is given ;
 The tears a happy bride may shed,
 Like sun-showers scarcely cloud her heaven ;
 Or if a cloud,—how soon appears
 An Iris calling smiles from tears !

VII.

The Hermit.

Years fly ; beneath the yew-tree's shade
 Thy father's holy dust is laid ;
 The brook glides on, the jasmine blows ;
 But where art thou, the wandering wife,
 And what the bliss, and what the woes,
 Glass'd in the mirror-sleep of life ?
 For whether life may laugh or weep,
 Death the true waking—life the sleep
 None know ! afar, unheard, unseen—
 The present heeds not what has been.
 Whirl'd in the gulf that thunders on,
 The floating raft forgets the gone.
 But all, perchance, *one* heart may find,
 Where Memory lives, a saint enshrined—
 Some altar-hearth, in which our shade
 The Household-god of Thought is made ;
 And each slight relic hoarded yet
 With faith more solemn than regret.
 Who tenants thy forsaken cot—
 Who tends thy childhood's favourite flowers—
 Who wakes, from every haunted spot,
 The Ghosts of vanish'd Hours ?

'Tis He whose sense was doom'd to borrow
 From thee the Vision and the Sorrow—
 To whom the Reason's golden ray,
 In the Heart's Anguish-storm was given;
 The peal that rent the clouds away
 Left clear the silent face of heaven!
 And wealth was his, and gentle birth,
 A form in fair proportions cast;
 But lonely still he walk'd the earth—
 The Hermit of the Past.
 It was not love—that dream was o'er!
 No stormy grief, no wild emotion;
 For oft, what once was Love of yore,
 The Memory soothes into Devotion!
 He bought the cot :—The garden flowers—
 The haunts his Eva's steps had trod,
 Books—thought—beguiled the lonely hours,
 That flow'd in peaceful waves to God.

VIII.

Desertion.

She sits, a Statue of Despair,
 In that far land, by that bright sea;
 She sits, a Statue of Despair,
 Whose smile an Angel seem'd to be—
 An angel that could never die,
 Its home the heaven of that blue eye!
 The smile is gone for ever there—
 She sits, the Statue of Despair!
 She knows it all—the hideous tale—
 The wrong, the perjury, and the shame;—
 Before the bride had left her vale,
 Another bore the nuptial name;

Another lives to claim the hand
 Whose clasp, the while it thrill'd, defiled ;
 Another lives, O God, to brand,
 The Bastard's curse upon her child !
 ANOTHER !—through all space she saw
 The face that mock'd the' unwedded mother's !
 In every voice she heard the Law,
 That cried, " Thou hast usurp'd another's !"
 And who the horror first had told ?—
 From *his* false lips in scorn it came—
 " Thy charms grow dim, my love grows cold ;
 My sails are spread—Farewell."
 Rigid in voiceless marble there—
 Come, sculptor, come—behold Despair !

The infant woke from feverish rest—
 Its smile she sees, its voice she hears—
 The marble melted from the breast,
 And all the Mother gush'd in tears.

IX.

The Infant-Burial.

To and fro the church-bell swinging,
 Heavily heaving to and fro ;
 Sadly go the mourners, bringing
 Dust to join the dust below.
 Through the church-aisle, lighted dim,
 Chaunted knells the ghostly hymn,
Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvat sæclum in favillâ!
 Mother ! flowers that bloom'd and perish'd
 Strew'd thy path the bridal day ;
 Now the bud thy grief has cherish'd,
 With the rest has pass'd away !

Leaf that fadeth—bud that bloometh,
 Mingled there, must wait the day
 When the seed the grave entombeth
 Burst to glory from the clay.

Dies iræ, dies illa,

Solvat sæclum in favillâ!

Happy are the old that die,
 With the sins of life repented;
 Happier they whose parting sigh
 Breaks a heart, from sin prevented!

Let the earth thine infant cover
 From the cares the living know;

Happier than the guilty lover—

Memory is at rest below!

Memory, like a fiend, shall follow,

Night and day, the steps of Crime;

Hark! the church-bell, dull and hollow,

Shakes another sand from time!

Through the church-aisle, lighted dim,

Chaunted knells the ghostly hymn;

Hear it, False One, where thou fliest,

Shriek to hear it when thou diest—

Dies iræ, dies illa,

Solvat sæclum in favillâ!

X.

The Return.

The cottage in the peaceful vale,

The jasmine round the door,

The hill still shelters from the gale,

The brook still glides before.

Without the porch, one summer noon,

The Hermit-dweller see!

In musing silence bending down,

The book upon his knee.

Who stands between thee and the sun?—
 A cloud herself,—the Wand'ring One!—
 A vacant sadness in the eyes,
 The mind a raz'd, defeated scroll;
 The light is in the laughing skies,
 And darkness, Eva, in thy soul!
 The beacon shaken in the storm,
 Had struggled still to gleam above
 The last sad wreck of human love,
 Upon the dying child to shed
 One ray—extinguish'd with the dead :
 O'er earth and heaven then rush'd the night!
 A wandering dream, a mindless form—
 A Star hurl'd headlong from its height,
 Guideless its course, and quench'd its light.
 Yet still the native instinct stirr'd
 The darkness of the breast—
 She flies, as flies the wounded bird,
 Unto the distant nest.
 O'er hill and waste, from land to land,
 Her heart the faithful instinct bore;
 And there, behold the Wanderer stand
 Beside her Childhood's Home once more!

XI.

Light and Darkness.

When earth is fair, and winds are still,
 When sunset gilds the western hill,
 Oft by the porch, with jasmine sweet,
 Or by the brook, with noiseless feet,
 Two silent forms are seen;
 So silent they—the place so lone—
 They seem like souls, when life is gone,
 That haunt where life has been :

And his to watch, as in the past
Her soul had watch'd his soul.
Alas! *her* darkness waits the last,
The grave, the only goal!
It is not what the leech can cure—
An erring chord, a jarring madness :
A calm so deep, it must endure—
So deep, thou scarce canst call it sadness ;
A summer night, whose shadows fall
Gently—but o'er the wrecks of all.
Yet, through the gloom, she seem'd to feel
His presence like a happier air,
Close by his side she lov'd to steal,
As if no ill could harm her there!
And when her looks his own would seek,
Some memory seem'd to wake the sigh,
Strive for kind words she could not speak,
And bless him in the tearful eye.
O sweet the jasmine's buds of snow,
In mornings soft with May,
And sweet in summer's silent glow,
The brooklet's merry play ;
But sweeter in that lonely place,
To God it must have been,
The soul that lit the Hermit's face,
Soul watching Soul within !

WHERE IS THE BRITON'S HOME ?

THE SONG OF THE EMIGRANTS.

(Intended for Music.)

“Wo ist des Sängers Vaterland ?”—KÖRNER.

I.

WHERE is the Briton's home ?
 Where the free step can roam,
 Where the free sun can glow,
 Where the free air can blow,
 Where a free ship can bear
 Hope and Strength ;—everywhere
 Wave upon wave can roll,—
 East and West—Pole to Pole—
 Where a free step can roam,—
 THERE is the Briton's Home !

II.

Where is the Briton's Home ?
 Where the brave heart can come,
 Where Labour wins a soil,
 Where a stout hand can toil ;
 Where, in the desert blown,
 Any far seed is sown ;
 Where Gold or Fame is won,
 Where never sets the sun ;
 Where a brave heart can come,—
 THERE is the Briton's Home !

III.

Where is the Briton's Home ?
 Where the Mind's Light can come ;
 Where our God's holy word
 Breaks on the savage herd ;
 Where a new flock is won
 To the bright Shepherd-One ;
 Where the church-bell can toll,
 Where soul can comfort soul,
 Where Holy FAITH can come,—
 THERE is the Briton's Home !

IV.

Where is the Briton's Home ?
 Where Man's great Law can come,
 Where the great Truth can speak,
 Where the Slave's chain can break,
 Where the White's scourge can cease,
 Where the Black dwells in peace,
 Where, from his angel-hall,
 God sees us brothers all ;
 Where Light and Freedom come,—
 THERE is the Briton's Home !

THE EVERLASTING GRAVE-DIGGER.

I stood in one vast burial-place,
 And saw his trade the sexton ply ;
 No life was in that bloodless face—
 No light was in that freezing eye,
 "Whose grave, old Sexton, digg'st thou here?"
 As, up to day, the labourer cast
 The relics hid for many a year ;—
 "Fool!—*from* the grave I dig the Past."

A skull lay ghastly at my feet,
 And by the skull a diadem;
 Pale shreds of Beauty's winding-sheet,
 And Beauty's bones outwhitening them!

"And of the Past, are these alone
 The relics that thou canst disclose?
 Bring back the Monarch to his throne,
 And give to Beauty's cheek the rose!"

"Stand from my path!" the Sexton said,
 "Thou ask'st what MEMORY cannot give—
 I only can disturb the dead,
 And FAITH alone can bid them live!"

THE FAIRY BRIDE.

A TALE.*

PART I.

"AND how canst thou in tourneys shine,
 Or tread the glittering festal floor?
 On chains of gold and cloth of pile,
 The looks of high-born Beauty smile;
 Nor peerless deeds, nor stainless line,
 Can lift to Fame the Poor!"

His mother spoke; and Elvar sigh'd—
 The sigh alone confess'd the truth;
 He curb'd the thoughts that gall'd the breast—
 High thoughts ill suit the russet vest;
 Yet Arthur's Court, in all its pride,
 Ne'er saw so fair a youth.

* The subject of this tale is suggested by one of the Fabliaux.

Far, to the forest's stillest shade,
 Sir Elvar took his lonely way;
 Beneath an oak, whose gentle frown
 Dimm'd moon's bright eyes, he laid him down;
 A sparkling Fount amidst the glade,
 At everlasting play.

"As sunlight to the forest tree"—
 'Twas thus his murmur'd musings ran—
 "And as amidst the sunlight's glow,
 The freshness of the fountain's flow—
 So—(ah, they never mine may be!)—
 Are Gold and Love to Man."

And while he spoke, a gentle air
 Seem'd stirring through the chrystal tides;
 A gleam, at first both dim and bright,
 Trembled to shape, in limbs of light,
 Gilded to sunbeams by the hair
 That glances where it glides;*

Till, clear and clearer, upward borne,
 The Fairy of the Fountain rose:
 The halo quivering round her, grew
 More steadfast, as the shape shone through—
 O sure, a second, softer Morn
 The Elder Daylight knows!

Born from the blue of those deep eyes,
 Such love its happy self betray'd
 As only haunts that tender race,
 With flower or fount, their dwelling place—
 The darling of the earth and skies
 She rose—that Fairy Maid!

* "With hair that gilds the water as it glides."

MARLOWE, EDW. II.

“ Elvar!” she said, and every breeze
Grew lull’d beneath that silver voice—
“ A love more true than minstrel sings,
A wealth that mocks the pomp of kings,
A Fairy gives where-e’er she sees
Her heart’s enchanted choice.

“ Then say, for I have loved thee long,
If human charms thy soul allure?—
For he no Fairy’s hand may gain,
Whom earthlier love could e’er profane.
The Children of the Star and Song,
We may but bless the Pure!”

“ Dream—lovelier far than e’er, I ween,
Entranced the glorious Merlin’s eyes—
Through childhood, to this happiest hour,
All free from human Beauty’s power,
My heart unresting, still has been
A prophet in its sighs.

“ Though never living shape hath brought,
Sweet love, that second life, to me,
Yet over earth, and through the heaven,
The thoughts that pined for love were driven.
I see thee—and I feel I sought
Through Earth and Heaven for thee!”

PART II.

Ask not the Bard to lift the veil
That hides the Fairy’s bridal bower;
If thou art young, go seek the glade,
And win thyself some fairy maid;
And rosy lips shall tell the tale
In some enchanted hour.

“ Farewell ! ” as by the greenwood tree,
The Fairy clasped the Mortal’s hand—
“ Our laws forbid thee to delay—
Not ours the life of every day !—
And Man, alas ! may rarely be
The Guest of Fairy-land.

“ Back to thy Prince’s halls depart,
The stateliest of his stately train :
Henceforth thy wish shall be thy mine—
Each toy that gold can purchase, thine—
A Fairy’s coffers are the heart
A mortal cannot drain.”

“ Talk not of wealth—that dream is o’er !—
These sunny locks be all my gold ! ”
“ Nay ! if in courts thy thoughts can stray
Along the fairy-forest way,
Wish but to see thy bride once more—
Thy bride thou shalt behold.

“ Yet hear the law on which must rest
Thy union with thine elfin bride ;
If ever by a word—a tone—
Thou mak’st our tender secret known,
The spell will vanish from thy breast—
The Fairy from thy side.

“ *If thou but boast to mortal ear,
The meanest charm thou findest in me,*
If—here his lips the sweet lips seal,
Low-murmuring, “ Love can ne’er reveal—
It cannot breathe to mortal ear,
The charms it finds in thee ! ”

PART III.

High joust, by Carduel's ancient town,
The Kingly Arthur holds to-day;
Around their Queen, in glittering row,
The Starry Hosts of Beauty glow.
Smile down, ye stars, on his renown
Who bears the wreath away!

There, they who gird the Table Round—
The war-gems of that wondrous ring!—
Well proven *he* in fields of fight,
To meet unscathed the meanest knight
Who sees, above the glorious ground,
His Lady and his King.

What prince as from some throne afar,
Shines through the dense unclosing throng?
Brodered with pearls, his mantle's fold
Flow'd o'er the mail embossed with gold;
As rides, from cloud to cloud, a star,
The Bright One rode along!

Twice fifty stalwart Squires, in air
The Stranger's knightly pennon bore;
Twice fifty Pages, pacing slow,
Scatter his largess as they go;
Calm through the crowd he passed, and, there,
Reined in the Lists before.

Light question in those elder days
The heralds made of birth and name.
Enough to wear the spurs of gold,
To share the pastime of the bold.
“Forwards!” their wands the Heralds raise,
And in the Lists he came.

Now rouse thee—rouse thee, bold Gawaine!

Think of thy Lady's eyes above;

Now rouse thee for thy Queen's sweet sake,

Thou peerless Launcelot of the Lake!

Vain Gawaine's might; and Launcelot's vain!—

They know no Fairy's love.

Before him swells the joyous tromp,

He comes—the victor's wreath is won!

Low to his Queen Sir Elvar kneels,

The helm no more his face conceals;

And one pale form amidst the pomp,

Sobs forth—"My gallant son!"

PART IV.

Sir Elvar is the fairest knight

That ever lured a lady's glance;

Sir Elvar is the wealthiest lord

That sits at good King Arthur's board;

The bravest in the joust or fight,

The lightest in the dance.

And never love, methinks, so blest

As his, this weary world has known;

For, every night before his eyes,

The charms that ne'er can fade arise—

A Star unseen by all the rest—

A Life for him alone.

And yet Sir Elvar is not blest—

He walks apart with brows of gloom—

"The meanest knight in Arthur's hall

His lady-love may tell to all;

He shows the flow'r that glads his breast—

His pride to boast its bloom!

"And I who clasp the fairest form
 That e'er to man's embrace was given,
 Must hide the gift as if in shame!
 What boots a prize we dare not name?
 The sun must shine if it would warm—
 A cloud is all my heaven!"

Much stately Gwynver* marvelled, how
 A knight so fair should seem so cold;
 What if a love for hope too high,
 Has chained the lip and awed the eye?
 A second joust—and surely now
 The secret shall be told.

For, *there*, alone shall ride the brave
 Whose glory dwells in Beauty's fame;
 Each, for his lady's honour, arms—
 His lance the test of rival charms.
 Woe him whom Beauty never gave
 The right to gild her name!

Sir Launcelot burns to win the prize—
 First in the Lists his shield is seen;
 A sunflower for device he took—
 "*Where-e'er thou shinest turns my look.*"
 So, as he paced the Lists, his eyes
 Still sought the Sun—his Queen!

"And why, Sir Elvar, loiterest thou?—
 Lives there no fair thy lance to claim?"
 No answer Elvar made the King;
 Sullen he stood without the ring.
 "Forwards!" An armed whirlwind now
 On horse and horseman came!

* Or Guenever; Arthur's somewhat light, if beautiful, queen. Her amours with the gentle Launcelot are well known.

And down goes princely Caradoc—

Down Tristan and stout Agrafayn,—
Unscath'd, unstirr'd, through that wild field,
Lo ! Lancelot bears his victor-shield ;

The sunflower brightning through the shock,
And through that iron rain.

“Sound trumpets—sound !—to South and North !

I, Launcelot of the Lake, proclaim,
That never sun and never air,
Or shone or breathed on form so fair
As hers—thrice, trumpets, sound it forth !—
Our Arthur's royal dame !”

And South and North, and West and East,

Upon the thunder-blast it flies !
Still on his steed sits Launcelot,
And even echo answers not ;
Till, as the stormy challenge ceas'd,
A voice was heard—“He lies !”

All turn'd their mute, astonish'd gaze,
To where the daring answer came,
And lo ! Sir Elvar's haughty crest !—
Fierce on the knight the gazers prest ;—
Their hands the sacred Heralds raise,—
And Gwynver weeps for shame.

“Sir Knight,” King Arthur smiling said,
(In smiles a king should wrath disguise,)
“Know'st thou, in truth, a dame so fair,
Our Queen may not with her compare ?
Ay, Gwynver, weep, and hide thy head—
Sir Launcelot, yield the prize.”

“I know a Fair, whose charms, to none
Beneath the Heaven's wide vault can yield !
Yet is it true, that Love, most fair
Deems *that* it loves—how mean soe'er !”

“Well said,—proclaim thy paragon,
And forward to the field !

“ If fair she be, thy Lady’s right
 Shall in her champion’s feats be seen.

Her name?”—Sir Elvar’s visage fell :

“ A vow forbids the name to tell.”

“ By Heaven ! thou most disloyal Knight,
 Thy lips insult thy Queen !

“ Foul shame, were Gwynver’s name disgraced
 By some light leman’s taunting smile !

Whoe’er—so run the tourney’s laws—

Would break a lance in Beauty’s cause,

Must name the Highborn and the Chaste—

The nameless are the vile.”

Sir Elvar glanced, where, stern and high,

The scornful champion rein’d his steed ;

Where, o’er the Lists the seats were raised,

And jealous dames disdainful gazed,

He glanced, nor caught one gentle eye—

Courts grow not friends at need :

“ King ! I have said, and keep my vow.”

“ Then hear thy sentence. On this ground,

Ere the third sun shall sink,—or bring

A fair outshining yonder ring,—

Or know my oath, as thine is now—

No flatterer shall be found !

“ Thy sword, unmeet to serve the right,—

Thy spurs, unfit for churls to wear,

Torn from thee ;—through the lists (aloud,

As thou but now amidst the crowd,)

Shall hiss the hoot,—‘ behold the knight,

Whose lips belie the fair !’

“ Three days I give ; nor think to fly

Thy doom ; for on the rider’s steed,

Though to the farthest earth he ride,—

Disgrace once mounted, clings beside ;

And Mockery, with unsleeping eye,

Still dogs the idle speed.”

Far to the forest's stillest shade,
 Sir Elvar took his lonely way;
 Beneath the oak, whose gentle frown
 Still dimm'd the noon, he laid him down,
 And saw the Fount amidst the glade,
 At everlasting play.

Alas, in vain his heart address,
 With sighs, with prayers, his elfin bride;—
 What though the vow conceal'd the name,
Did not the boast the charms proclaim?
 The spell has vanish'd from his breast,
 The fairy from his side.

Oh, not for vulgar homage made,
 The holier beauty formed for one;
 It asks no wreath the arm can win;
 Its lists—its world—the heart within;
 All love most sacred haunts the shade—
 The star shrinks from the sun:

Three days the wand'rer roved in vain;
 Up rose the fatal dawn at last!
 The lists are set, the galleries raised,
 And, scorned by all the eyes that gazed,
 Alone he fronts the crowd again,
 And hears the sentence past.

Now, as, amidst the hooting scorn,
 Rude hands the hard command fulfil,
 While rings the challenge—"Sun and air
 Ne'er shone, ne'er breathed, on form so fair
 As Arthur's Queen,"—a single horn
 Came from the forest hill.

A note so distant and so lone,
 And yet so sweet,—it thrilled along,
 It hush'd the Champion on his steed,
 Startled the rude hands from their deed,
 Charmed the stern Arthur on his throne,
 And still'd the shouting throng.

To North, to South, to East, and West,
They turned their eyes ; and o'er the plain,
On palfry white, a Ladye rode ;
As woven light her mantle glowed.
Two lovely shapes, in azure drest,
To lead the jewell'd rein.

The crowd gave way as on they bore,
That vision from the Land of Dreams ;
Veiled as the gentle rider's face,
But not the two her path that grace.
How dim beside the charms they wore
All human beauty seems !

So to the throne the pageant came,
And thus the Fairy to the King :
“ Ill suits a prince, for ever dear,
By minstrel's song, to knighthood's ear,
The wrath that wrongs the noble vow,
Which hallows ev'n a name.

“ Bloom there no flowers more sweet by night ?
Come, Queen, before the judgment throne ;
Behold Sir Elvar's nameless bride !
Now, Queen, his doom thyself decide.”
She raised her veil,—and all her light
Of beauty round them shone !

The bloom, the eyes, the locks, the smile,
That never earth nor time could dim ;—
Day grew more bright, and air more clear,
As Heaven itself were brought more near.—
And oh ! *his* joy, who felt, the while,
That light but glowed for him !

“ My steed, my lance, vain Champion, now
To arms : and Heaven defend the right !”—
Here spake the Queen, “ the strife is past,”
And in the lists her glove she cast,
“ And I myself will crown thy brow,
Thou love-defended Knight !”

He comes to claim the garland crown ;
The changeful thousands shout his name ;
And faithless beauty round him smil'd,
How cold, beside the Forest's Child ,
Who asked not love to bring renown,
And clung to love in shame !

He bears the prize to those dear feet ;
"Not mine the guerdon ! oh, not mine !"
Sadly the fated Fairy hears,
And smiles thro' unreproachful tears ;
"Nay, keep the flowers, and be they sweet
When I—no more am thine !"

She lower'd the veil, she turn'd the rein,
And ere his lips replied, was gone.
As on she went her charmed way,
No mortal dared the steps to stay ;
And when she vanish'd from the plain
All space seemed left alone !

Oh, woe ! that fairy shape no more
Shall bless thy love or charm thy pride !
He seeks the wood, he gains the spot—
The Tree is there, the Fountain not :—
Dried up :—its mirthful play is o'er.
Ah, where the Fairy-bride ?

Alas, with fairies as with men,
Who love are victims from the birth !
A fearful doom the fairy shrouds,
If once unveil'd by day to crowds.
The Fountain vanished from the glen,
The Fairy from the earth !

THE SABBATH.

FRESH glides the brook and blows the gale,
 Yet yonder halts the quiet mill ;
 The whirring wheel, the rushing sail,
 How motionless and still !

Six days stern Labour shuts the poor
 From Nature's careless banquet-hall ;
 The seventh, an Angel opes the door,
 And, smiling, welcomes all !

A Father's tender mercy gave
 This holy respite to the breast,
 To breathe the gale, to watch the wave,
 And know—the wheel may rest !

Six days of toil, poor child of Cain,
 Thy strength thy master's slave must be ;
 The seventh, the limbs escape the chain —
 A God hath made thee free !

The fields that yester-morning knew
 Thy footsteps as their serf, survey ;
 On thee, as them, descends the dew,
 The baptism of the day.

Fresh glides the brook and blows the gale,
 But yonder halts the quiet mill ;
 The whirring wheel, the rushing sail,
 How motionless and still !

So rest,—O weary heart !—but, lo,
 The church-spire, glist'ning up to heaven,
 To warn thee where thy thoughts should go
 The day thy God hath given !

Lone through the landscape's solemn rest,
 The spire its moral points on high,
 O, Soul, at peace within the breast,
 Rise, mingling with the sky!

They tell thee, in their dreaming school,
 Of Power from old Dominion hurl'd,
 When rich and poor, with juster rule,
 Shall share the alter'd world.

Alas! since Time itself began,
 That fable hath but fool'd the hour;
 Each age that ripens Power in Man,
 But subjects Man to Power.

Yet every day in seven, at least,
 One bright Republic shall be known;—
 Man's world awhile hath surely ceast,
 When God proclaims his own!

Six days may Rank divide the poor,
 O Dives, from thy banquet hall—
 The seventh the Father opes the door,
 And holds his feast for all!

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

FROM Heaven, what fancy stole
 The dream of some good spirit, aye at hand,
 The seraph whispering to the exiled soul
 Tales of its native land?

Who to the cradle gave
 The unseen Watcher by the Mother's side,
 Born with the birth, and journeying to the grave,
 The holy Angel-guide?

Is it a Fable ?—No !

I heard LOVE answer from the sunlit air,
 “ Still where my presence lights the darkness, know
 Life’s Angel-guide is there ! ”—

Is it a Fable ?—Hark !

FAITH answers, from the blue vault’s farthest star,
 “ I am the Pilot of thy wandering bark,
 Thy Guide to shores afar ! ”

Is it a Fable ?—Sweet,

From wave, from air, from every forest-tree,
 The murmur spoke—“ Each thing thine eyes can greet
 An Angel-guide can be !

“ From myriads take thy choice,
 In all that lives a guide to God is given ;
 Ever thou hear’st some Angel-guardian’s voice
 When Nature speaks of Heaven ! ”

THE MIND AND THE HEART.

“ Ma vie est un combat.”

I WAR for ever with my heart,
 That pines when most I would be gay ;
 What matter if our dreams depart ?—
 Let labour chase regrets away !

Though every toil but wakes the spell
 To rouse the Falsehood and the Foe,
 Why let the breeze disturb the well ;
 No storm can reach the TRUTH below.

The Mind can reign in Mind alone.
 “ Alas ! ” the heavy Heart replies,
 “ What king but wearies of his throne,
 If girt but by unloving eyes.

“ Along the world, the oceans whelm,
The eye but tracks the parted Dove ;
And sad as death is all thy realm,
Without the olive-branch of Love.”

Before my gaze I see my youth,
The ghost of gentler years, arise,
With looks that yearn'd for every truth,
And wings that sought the farthest skies.

The sovereign of a land of dreams,
Before this waking world began,
How bright the radiant phantom seems
Beside the time-worn weary man !

How, then, the Heart rejoiced in all
That roused the quick aspiring Mind !
What glorious music Hope could call
From every Memory left behind !

Had some sad seraph left the heaven,
The sanguine soul to undeceive,
Such faith in this fair earth was given,
No voice had made me disbelieve ;—

So large a love for all that live,
The spendthrift heart, in hope, possest,—
It was so sweet a gift to give
The trust that overflowed the breast ;—

A seraph's hand in vain had raised
The lovely mask from Falsehood's brow ;
Nor, charmed the less, I still had gazed
Along the disenchanted NOW.

Alas ! no fiend the seer can spell
So dims the sunlight from the air
As that which, waked from Memory's cell,
Presents the ghost of what we were !

Beside that ghost of time gone by,
 I stand upon the waste alone !
 And if a sunbeam light the sky,
 It wakes no floweret from the stone.

The icy calm that smiles on all,
 But comes from pride that veils the pain ;
 Alas, how much we fain would call
 Content—is nothing but disdain !

THE DEAD QUEEN.

“ MARY STUART perished at the age of forty-four years and two months. Her remains were taken from her weeping servants, and a green cloth, torn in haste from an old billiard table, was flung over her once beautiful form. Thus it remained, unwatched and unattended, except by a poor little lap-dog which could not be induced to quit the body of its mistress. This faithful little animal was found dead two days afterwards, and the circumstance made such an impression, even on the hard-hearted minister of Elizabeth, that it was mentioned in the official dispatches.”—*Mrs. Jameson's Female Sovereigns—Mary, Queen of Scots.*

NEGLECTED in that ancient hall, what once had been a
 monarch lay,
 And all this peopled world could spare not one to watch
 beside the clay.
 The loveliest shape that ever yet upon the world had shone—
 A sunbeam strayed from fairy climes, to fade upon a throne ;
 The fatal face, on which to look was to adore and die,
 The Syren's voice that stirr'd a storm with each melodious sigh.
 How many victims, while in life, that charmèd smile had made ;
 Or in the field, or by the block, to bless what had betrayed !
 And now that headless, mangled corpse—that dark and
 dreary sleep—
 And, sad in death as once in life, no mourner stays to weep.
 Stern Knox, methinks those hueless lips a harsher truth can
 teach

To royal pomps, than ever thine to royal sins could preach
 So lovely and so lov'd of old, so shunn'd and ghastly now !
 O God, and what a king—but take the bauble from the brow !
 The world it seems so full of life—of life that well might spare
 One lonely heart to watch above the lonely relics there ;—
 And not one human eye ;—yet see, what stirs the funeral pall ?
 What sound—a sound of sorrow—wails low-moaning
 through the hall ?

Close by the world-forsaken form, one thing a vigil keeps,
 At every sound without, more near to that still'd heart it
 creeps ;

It gazes on those glazed eyes—it hearkens for a breath—
 It does not know, poor fool, why Love should not be true
 to Death.

It still can fawn, as fond a slave, upon that powerless hand ;
 It still can hear from voiceless lips, a voice that can command.
 To *that* alone, through all the earth, no matter what had been,
 The pomp or fate, the guilt or doom—the Dead was still a
 Queen.

Yet were the Queen a village-maid, it still had loved, the same,
 The *human friend* from whom its all of grief or gladness came.
 With eyes that never turned aside, it watched the senseless
 clay—

With moan that never ceased, it breath'd its broken heart
 away.

And when, at length, the doors unclosed, and human steps
 drew nigh,

The human pity paused, abashed, before that faithful eye !
 It seemed to gaze with such reproach on those who could forsake !
 Then turn'd to watch again, as if the steps the sleep might wake !
 They paused—they moved—they touched the pall !—a cry,
 and *both* were still—

The one whom Hate had slain, the one whom Love sufficed to
 kill !

Stern Doomer, Titan-Tudor, throned amidst thy pomp, to-day,
 When thy hard eyes shall scan the tale yon hireling scribes
 convey ;

When thou shalt read how, at the last, one thing at least was
found

Beside thy butchered rival's corpse, the headless and discrown'd,
Shall not the shudder half foretell thine own expiring hour,
When those who crowd the regal hall, shall fly the falling tower;
When, haunted by the ghost of him thy madden'd love hath slain,
Through vacant space thy looks shall seek *one thing that loves*
—in vain?

Though priest and noble round thy bed of bitter death shall
crowd,

Far more of love was found beside thy victim's gory shroud !

THE SOULS OF BOOKS.

I.

SIT here and muse!—it is an antique room—
High-roof'd, with casements, through whose purple pane
Unwilling Daylight stealing through the gloom,
Comes like a fearful stranger.

There THEY reign,
(In loftier pomp than waking life had known,)
The Kings of Thought!—not crown'd until the grave,
When Agamemnon sinks into the tomb,
The beggar Homer mounts the Monarch's throne,
Ye ever-living and imperial Souls,
Who rule us from the page in which ye breathe,
All that divide us from the clod ye gave!—
Law—Order—Love—Intelligence—the sense
Of Beauty—Music and the Minstrel's wreath!—
What were our wanderings if without your goals?
As air and light, the glory ye dispense,
Becomes our being—who of us can tell
What he had been, had Cadmus never taught
To man the magic that embalms the thought—
Had Plato never spoken from his cell,

Or his high harp blind Homer never strung?—
Kinder all earth hath grown since genial Shakspeare sung!

II.

Hark! while we muse, without the walls is heard
The various murmur of the labouring crowd.
How still, within those archive-cells interr'd,
The Calm Ones reign!—and yet they rouse the loud
Passions and tumults of the circling world!
From them, how many a youthful Tully caught
The zest and ardour of the eager Bar;
From them, how many a young Ambition sought
Gay meteors glancing o'er the sands afar—
By them each restless wing has been unfurl'd,
And their ghosts urge each rival's rushing car!
They made yon Preacher zealous for the truth;
They made yon Poet wistful for the star;
Gave Age its pastime—fired the cheek of Youth—
The unseen sires of all our beings are,—

III.

And now so still! This, Cicero, is thy heart!
I hear it beating through each purple line.
This is thyself, Anacreon—yet, thou art
Wreath'd, as in Athens, with the Cnidian Vine.
I ope thy pages, Milton, and, behold,
Thy spirit meets me in the haunted ground!—
Sublime and eloquent, as while, of old,
“It flamed and sparkled in its crystal bound;”
These *are* yourselves—your life of life! The Wise,
(Minstrel or Sage,) *out* of their books, are clay;
But *in* their books, as from their graves, they rise,
Angels—that, side by side, upon our way,
Walk with and warn us!

Hark! the world so loud,
And *they*, the movers of the world, so still!

* Comus.

What gives this beauty to the grave? the shroud
 Scarce wraps the Poet, than at once there cease
 Envy and Hate! "Nine cities claim him dead,
 Through which the living Homer begg'd his bread!"
 And what the charm that can such health distil
 From withered leaves—oft poisons in their bloom?
 We call some books immoral! *Do they live?*
 If so, believe me, TIME hath made them pure.
 In Books, the veriest wicked rest in peace—
 God wills that nothing evil should endure;
 The grosser parts fly off and leave the whole,
 As the dust leaves the disembodied soul!
 Come from thy niche, Lucretius! Thou didst give
 Man the black creed of Nothing in the tomb!
 Well, when we read thee, does the dogma taint?
 No; with a listless eye we pass it o'er,
 And linger only on the hues that paint
 The Poet's spirit lovelier than his lore.
 None learn from thee to cavil with their God;
 None commune with thy genius, to depart
 Without a loftier instinct of the heart.
 Thou mak'st no Atheist—thou but mak'st the mind
 Richer in gifts which Atheists best confute—
 FANCY AND THOUGHT! 'Tis these that from the sed
 Lift us! The life which soars above the brute
 Ever and mightiest, breathes from a great Poet's lute!
 Lo! that grim Merriment of Hatred;*—born
 Of him,—the Master-Mocker of Mankind,
 Beside the grin of whose malignant spleen,
 Voltaire's gay sarcasm seems a smile serene,—
 Do we not place it in our children's hands,
 Leading young Hope through Lemuel's fabled lands—
 God's and man's libel in that foul yahoo!—
 Well, and what mischief can the libel do?
 O impotence of Genius to belie
 Its glorious task—its mission from the sky!

* Gulliver's Travels.

Swift wrote this book to wreak a ribald scorn
 On aught the Man should love or Priest should mourn—
 And lo! the book, from all its ends beguil'd,
 A harmless wonder to some happy child!

IV.

All books grow homilies by time; they are
 Temples, at once, and Landmarks. In them, we
 Who *but* for them, upon that inch of ground
 We call "THE PRESENT," from the cell could see
 No daylight trembling on the dungeon bar;
 Turn, as we list, the globe's great axle round,
 Traverse all space, and number every star,
 And feel the Near less household than the Far!
 There is no Past, so long as Books shall live!
 A disinterr'd Pompeii wakes again
 For him who seeks yon well; lost cities give
 Up their untarnish'd wonders, and the reign
 Of Jove revives and Saturn:—At our will
 Rise dome and tower, on Delphi's sacred hill;
 Bloom Cimon's trees in Academe;*—along
 Leucadia's headland, sighs the Lesbian's song;
 With Ægypt's Queen once more we sail the Nile,
 And learn how worlds are barter'd for a smile;—
 Rise up, ye walls, with gardens blooming o'er,
 Ope but that page—lo, Babylon once more!

V.

Ye make the Past our heritage and home;
 And is this all? No; by each prophet sage—
 No; by the herald souls that Greece and Rome
 Sent forth, like hymns, to greet the Morning Star
 That rose on Bethlehem—by thy golden page,
 Melodious Plato—by thy solemn dreams,
 World-wearied Tully!—and, above ye all,
 By **THIS**, the Everlasting Monument

* Plut. in Vit. Cim.

Of God to mortals, on whose front the beams
Flash glory-breathing day—our lights ye are
To the dark Bourne beyond; in you are sent
The types of Truths whose life is **THE TO-COME**;
In you soars up the Adam from the fall;
In you the **FUTURE** as the **PAST** is given—
Ev'n in our death ye bid us hail our birth;—
Unfold these pages, and beheld the Heaven,
Without one grave-stone left upon the Earth!

THE LAST CRUSADER.

LEFT to the Saviour's conquering foes,
The land that girds the Saviour's grave;
Where Godfrey's crozier-standard rose,
He saw the crescent-banner-wave.

There, o'er the gently-broken vale,
The halo-light on Zion glow'd;
There Kedron, with a voice of wail,
By tombs* of saints and heroes flow'd;

There still the olives silver o'er
The dimness of the distant hill;
There still the flowers that Sharon bore,
Calm air with many an odour fill.

Slowly **THE LAST CRUSADER** eyed
The towers, the mount, the stream, the plain,
And thought of those whose blood had dyed
The earth with crimson streams in vain!

He thought of that sublime array,
The Hosts, that over land and deep
The Hermit marshall'd on their way,
To see those towers, and halt to weep!†

* The valley, Jehoshaphat, through which rolls the torrent of the Kedron, is studded with tombs.

† See Tasso, *Ger. Lib. cant. iii. st. vi.*

Resign'd the lov'd familiar lands,
O'er burning wastes the cross to bear,
And rescue from the Paynim's hands
No empire save a sepulchre!

And vain the hope, and vain the loss,
And vain the famine and the strife;
In vain the faith that bore the Cross,
The valour prodigal of life

And vain was Richard's lion-soul,
And guileless Godfrey's patient mind—
Like waves on shore, they reach'd the goal,
To die, and leave no trace behind!

“O God!” the last Crusader cried,
“And art thou careless of thine own?
For us thy Son in Salem died,
And Salem is the scoffer's throne!

“And shall we leave, from age to age,
To godless hands the Holy Tomb?
Against thy saints the heathen rage—
Launch forth thy lightnings, and consume!”

Swift, as he spoke, before his sight
A Form flash'd, white-robed, from above;
All Heaven was in those looks of light,
But Heaven, whose native air is love.

“Alas!” the solemn Vision said,
“Thy God is of the shield and spear—
To bless the Quick and raise the Dead,
The Saviour-God descended here!

“Ah! know'st thou not the very name*
Of SALEM bids thy carnage cease—
A symbol in itself to claim
God's People to a Home of PEACE!

* The signification of the name “Salem,” as written by the Hebrews, is the Abode, or People, of PEACE.

“ Ask not the Father to reward
 The hearts that seek, through blood, the Son;
 O Warrior! never by the sword
 The Saviour's Holy Land is won!”

THE ILL-OMENED MARRIAGE.

A DOMESTIC STORY.

I.

WHERE Avon, winding pastoral meads along,
 Steals its blue course, a baffled Dreamer came;
 The self-made exile from the busy throng:—
 Born to high fortunes, and a noble name,
 Lord Ruthven's youth had love and pleasure known;
 And o'er the quicksands, veil'd in verdure, Fame,
 The mighty meteor, had deceiving shone.
 But fickle joys demand the fickle mind;
 Envy pursued the fame, regret the pleasure,
 The earnest heart for kindred commune pin'd,
 And the soul starved amidst the golden treasure.
 Large was his bounty, larger still his trust
 In human faith, till falsehood chill'd the zeal,
 And slow experience canker'd, like a rust,
 The native strength and brightness of the steel:—
 Friends had betray'd, and love had left his side;
 What sprung from virtues, into griefs had grown;
 The world's wise jury, knaves and fools, decide
 The guilt of natures nobler than their own.
 A disappointed, wrong'd, and weary man,
 He sought the heart of yon long-silent hall;
 Fresh in the vale below the river ran,—
 Nature, like Time, steals from our hearts the gall,
 And drops from brooding wings the dews, reviving all.

II.

Below those towers, in the green valley's glen,
 His refuge, too, a fellow-sufferer sought;
 Seared by the trials, to the herd of men
 More stern than those whose ploughshare is the thought,
 Long, 'mid the Merchant-Princes of the Mart,
 Had Seaton seen his swelling sails depart,
 The Hermes-Messengers of earth's great god,
 Mammon!—(How from thy golden throne, O Trade,
 Thou mov'st the world's foundations with a nod!)
 But She adored at Antium,* present ever
 To change the pæan to the funeral dirge,
 Delights the temples of our pride to shiver,
 Rides on the bark, that cleaves the subject surge,
 O'er all that rules, *her* rule she loves to hold,
 Tramples earth's pagan gods, and shakes the throne of Gold!
 Reverses came: the whirlwind of a day
 Swept the bold labours of a life away;
 And, like the captain of a fleet destroy'd,
 Cast by a plank upon some barren strand,
 Where rode a thousand galleys, gloom'd a void,
 And the sun lit one solitude—the land!

True, it was said that aid, if timely lent,
 Might raise the fortunes which the storm had bent,
 But blasted not;—that skill and zeal might yet
 Restore the credit, and redeem the debt.
 The house, though shattered, still preserved its name,
 And one rich chance might win back all its fame.
 But Seaton in his conscience, or his pride,
 Left bolder hands the desperate helm to guide:
 "Not, I," he said, "to risks foreseen will lure
 One other doom; mine own I can endure;"
 And so he passed from that tumultuous stage
 To face the spectres—Poverty and Age.

* Fortune;—Horat. Od. xxxv. lib. 1.

Yet not alone :—Of all the ruined “ power,
 Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious” Gold,
 Villa, and palace ; in his desolate hour
 One eye look’d comfort, one sweet voice consol’d.
 With Hunger at his board, the Pauper smil’d,
 And bless’d the tender Fate that spared his child.

III.

Fair was thy face, young Constance ; yet more fair,
 In fallen fortunes, to the father’s eyes !
 One flower looks lovelier in the wintry air
 Than all the garden in the summer skies.

Cradled in luxury, reared to happy youth,
 By all that wakes the pride or lulls the pain,
 With every grace that half redeems to truth
 The siren, music of the flatterer’s strain,
 Fresh from the world she came, the gloom to share,
 And lull to patience the vex’d soul of care :
 For there are hues to gentler natures given,
 Which shine not forth till trouble cloud the heaven ;
 And then, the glory from the trouble won,
 Bright on the Iris stream the rays that leave the sun.
 Yet were there moments when she stole apart
 To nurse one memory, own’d but to the heart :—
 In her fair days such love—(*if* love in sooth)—
 As first soft Fancy stirs in virgin Youth—
 The May-day-Zephyr of the happy breast,
 Rippling the surface, though the deep’s at rest—
 Had charm’d her eye, her thought it haunted yet,
 And grew more strong through silence and regret.
 And he thus honoured, formed, in truth, to please
 Young eyes that look not deep into the soul—
 The high-born bearing, polished into ease,
 The craft that veils what virtue should controul ;
 The modell’d form, and the melodious voice,
 And every lighter grace that lures the’ enamoured choice.

Poor, but ambitious, wise in all the art
 That to the fortunes moulds the supple heart,
 Though sprung from lineage loftier than her own,
 Yet far beneath the state of Seaton's heir,
 Young Harcourt woo'd, perchance in wiliest tone,
 Because True Love—the Falterer—spoke not there:
 But she believed, and dream'd that she was blest!
 Her father liked not, yet left liking free;
 Still at his board the suitor was a guest,
 And hope went forth amidst the days to be.
 Yet now—for Harcourt's service was the sword—
 His duty called him to a distant clime.
 But one short year, and they shall meet to chain
 (Alas! can roses fetter?) Love to Time.
 A year's delay!—'their youth may well afford
 So brief a trial, and in absence gain
 Fresh food for Faith.' So spake the anxious Sire:
 The Lover yielded, and they parted—She
 To watch, the vestal, o'er a lonely fire;
 And He?—had Harcourt learned on what a reed
 Leaned all the worldling in the maid adored?
 Did he the pretext seize, or faintly plead
 To the reluctant Sire?—the first to fly,
 When the dark speck grew thickening o'er the sky?—
 Did he—I say not—but vague rumours ran
 Of the impending storm; a week went by,
 And the mart's monarch was a ruined man!

IV.

Yet still fair Constance, in her lone retreat,
 Cherished the woman's fond belief in truth
 They who deceive not, dream not of deceit:
 Faith in the loved, is thy religion, Youth!
 Though now to both might Fortune's wrath deny
 The plighted vows, the Altar, and the Home,
 Yet, still and far, there glittered on the eye,
 Life's only fairy land—the days to come!

True, he was silent!—true, no letter brought
 The absent soul, to cheer the sorrowing one;
 But in those distant climes had Rumour taught
 As yet the tidings of the Sire undone?
 All might miscarry—seas and lands conjoin
 To bar the news, and intercept the scroll;
 All easier to believe than doubt the shrine,
 Which such sweet vows had hallowed to the soul.
 But ever foremost in her wish, was yet
 To veil each memory that might seem of sorrow:
 That to her father, ne'er her own regret
 Of the gone day might darken more the morrow.
 Lull'd by her cheerful looks, he deemed, in truth,
 The Childlike Fancy fled the ripening heart of Youth.

PART II.

I.

Oft to a green creek, in the margin mead,
 The fairy harbour of the winding wave,
 Young Constance came :—the wild thyme and the reed,
 Round the lone seat their noontide fragrance gave;
 Behind, the cottage, with its woodbine walls
 Half-seen, gleam'd smiling through the calm repose,
 High o'er the opposing bank, the feudal halls
 Of Ruthven, mournful as their master, rose.
 A lonely spot; perchance, at times, the oar
 A livelier wavelet to her feet would fling;
 But the scared Silence settled back once more
 O'er its green eyrie, with yet tenderer wing:

One day as thus she sat, and on her knees
 The Book—(O Avon's Minstrel, was it thine?)
 The boughs behind her stirred, as with a breeze,
 But ear and eye were spell-bound by the line,
 Charming all outer life to thoughts and shapes divine.
 She did not hear the stir—she saw not there
 The Stranger, startled from his musing mood,
 Pause in the copse to marvel at the fair

Naiad or Dryad of the solitude.

Entranced he gazed—for haply most to those
Pall'd with the hackneyed idols of the crowd,
The charm that gives the glory to the rose,
Which seems its sweetness from the world to shroud.
And, oh, the candour of that brow of truth—
The virgin innocence of that soft face !
To the worn heart it seemed like its own youth
Seen in a dream—with all its careless grace,
With all the unblighted freshness of its bloom—
With all the Aurora of its opening day,
Ere yet one beam could scorch, one cloudlet gloom,
Or from one leaf a breath had breathed the dews away.

II.

Silent he stood, and when she moved, withdrew
Into the bowering copse. She closed the book,
And homeward went. Behind at distance, too,
Unmark'd, the selfsame path the Stranger took.
Something, he scarce knew what, allured him on—
Her name, her home, at least 'twere sweet to know.
Already half its gloom from earth was gone,
And that dull stream, Existence, seemed to flow
With a less weary sloth. O human heart—
How vainly thinkst thou Hope can ever die !
A moment—and to life what wings can start,
Wak'd from their sleep by some unconscious eye,
To catch the passing wind, and glitter to the sky.

III.

She gains the cot—to vanish from his view,—
When, as he winds the path the threshold near,
Loud voices!—hark! a woman's shriek within,
And all is silent; still he halts to hear.
The half-closed door intrusion seems to woo;
His steps the threshold pass—a chamber win—
And, grouping there, the noble Stranger saw
The hunted Poverty at bay with Law.

Pale, on that grey-haired man, the Daughter hung—
 Sullen the hard ones stood reluctant round,
 Waiting until the arms that vainly clung,
 Should loose their hold. His voice the Stranger found—
 “And what this old man’s crime?” “He cannot pay
 What he hath bought!” the Tool of Law replied;
 “This is our warrant”—

From his child away
 The old man broke, and moving to the door,
 Murmured—“Thank Heaven, that in my hour of pride,
 My wealth was ever gentle with the poor!
 Sirs, I am ready!—Nay, my child!—Lead on!”
 But while he spoke, in fragments on the floor,
 Rent by the Stranger’s hand, the parchment lay:
 “Men, take your gold!—your task is done! . Begone!”
 Those whom we succour, how the aid endears!—
 And, oh, how danger-fraught are Beauty’s grateful tears!

IV.

So, from that hour to that love-lighted home,
 Oft from his cheerless halls did Ruthven come;
 Well did he soothe the griefs his host had known,
 But well—too proud for pity—veil’d his own.
 Silent, he watch’d the gentle daughter’s soul,
 Scann’d every charm, and peerless found the whole;
 He spoke not love, and if his looks betray’d,
 The anxious Sire was wiser than the Maid.
 Still, ever list’ning, on her lips he hung,
 Hush’d when she spoke—enraptured when she sung!
 And when the hues her favourite art bestow’d,
 Like a new hope from the fairy fancy glow’d,
 As the cold canvass with the image warms,
 As from the blank, start forth the breathing forms,
 So would he look within him, and compare
 With those mute shapes, the new-born phantoms there;
 Upon the mind, as on the canvass rose,
 The young fresh world, the ideal only knows—

Landscapes more fair than those beneath the sun,
 And *both* from one sweet source their life and glory won.
 What music charm'd the verse on which she gazed ;
 How doubly dear the poet that she praised !
 And when she spoke, and, from the affluent mind !
 That books had stored and intercourse refin'd,
 Pour'd forth the treasures,—still his choice address
 To her mild heart what seem'd to please it best ;
 Yet still the Maiden dream'd not that *he* loved
 Who flattered never, and at times reproved—
 Reproved—but oh, so tenderly !—and ne'er
 But for such faults as soils the purest bear—
 A trust too liberal in our common race,
 Which scarce divides the noble from the base,
 A sight too dazzled by the outward hues,
 A sense, though clear, too timid to refuse ;
 Yielding the course that it would fain pursue,
 Still to each guide that proffered it the clue ;
 And that soft shrinking into self—allied,
 If half to Diffidence—yet half to Pride.—
 He loved her, and she loved him not ;—revered
 His lofty nature, and, revering, fear'd.
 A certain sadness, shadowing thought and care,
 To her seem'd sternness, in his noble air ;
 The glorious gifts—the kingly mind she saw,
 As things that lured not tenderness, but awe !
 And the dark beauty of his musing eye,
 Chill'd back the heart, from which it woo'd reply.
 Harcourt !—the gay—the prodigal of youth,
 Still charmed her fancy, while he chained her truth !

V.

Seaton, meanwhile, the love of Ruthven read,
 With hopes made sanguine by a father's pride.
 The Past its griefs, the Future lost its dread—
 Could he but live to see his child the bride
 Of one so wise, so kind—lover, at once, and guide.

Silent at first—at last the deeps o'erflow'd;
And, as the sire and daughter sate alone
One summer eve, without their calm abode,
The sunset shining on the time-worn stone
Grey, through green woods, of Ruthven's stately towers,—
He thought how in his fortune's palmiest hours
His choice had, midst the loftiest of the land,
Found none so worthy of his daughter's hand;
And now, in poverty, the grave in view,
That daughter left in this ill world alone,
To think that choice should yet be hers! He drew
Close to her side, and clasp'd her to his heart,
And murmured, "Yes, my Constance, when we part,
When these grey hairs go down into the dust,
How sweet my treasure to that soul to trust;
And from the ruins of a life o'erthrown,
See all that life most toil'd for, still thine own!
Ah! rather bless'd the misery that effaced
Each younger memory of the unworthier one—
Grateful the shadow—since the darkness chased
The insects only fluttering in the sun."
Then the truth glares upon her eyes—the rose
Pales from her cheek—the sire pursues the theme,
And as he speaks, the wretched daughter knows
How all his heart is anchor'd in the dream.
She does not dare, the soft one, to dispel
The happy hope.—Alas! *how* dare to dim
Back to their gloom the smiles that rarely dwell
On those sad lips, unveil her soul to him,
And say, "No, Father; let thy smiles depart,
There where it clung before, still clings my faithful heart!"

VI.

And while they sate, up the green sloping hill
The stately form of Ruthven slowly came!
She saw—she fled—and in her chamber, still
Her white lips, trembling, murmured Harcourt's name!

Then from that hour her cheerful mien was fled ;
 Her colour waned when Ruthven's step drew near,
 And her frame shook. His Hope the change but fed ;
 Aye to its own wild visions Hope the Seer,
 Deem'd Virgin Love best told by the soft Virgin fear.
 But still he spoke not love, though Seaton ever
 Press'd the conviction on her shrinking ear.
 And now, distrust of Harcourt's faith, combin'd
 With the sharp struggles of that gentle mind.
 Why still no tidings?—could the seas dis sever
 All those kind bonds, which still the heart to heart
 In absence link?—a year had pass'd, and never
 One line—one word, to say, "Thou still art dear?"
 Oh, in the life of love, how long one lonely year!

VII.

While thus the soul's worst doubt was link'd with grief,—
 Lord Ruthven's absence brought a brief relief :
 For days, for weeks, some cause, unknown to all,
 Had won the lonely master from his hall.
 Much Seaton marvell'd ! half disposed to blame ;
 "Gone, and no word ev'n absence to proclaim!"—
 When, sudden as he went, the truant came ;
~~Franker~~ his brow, and brighter was his look,
 And with a warmer clasp his host's wan hand he took :—
 "Joy to thee, friend ; thy race is not yet run,
 Thy fortunes yet thy genius shall restore,
 Thy debts are cancell'd—nay, thy house, undone,
 Springs from its ashes, and thy name once more,
 Clear from all stain, revives—revives to stand
 'Mid England's boasts—the pillars of the land!
 Joy, Seaton, joy !"

"O mock me not!—explain!—

Constance, I dream ! My name—thy father's name !
 What could rebuild the shatter'd wrecks again ?
 On earth I know Misfortune hath no claim.
 Doth Heaven, as once, to earth its angels send ?"
 "Man, I am rich, and thou hast called me FRIEND !"

VIII.

He paused, and glanced on Constance, and his heart
 Heaved with the passionate tides restrained no more;
 Speechless she stood; then, waking with a start,
 Fell at his knees, and wept. And from the floor
 He raised, and spoke—"No, no, not *thine* to kneel!
 What earth's whole treasures to thy priceless love?
 I would not woo thee, Constance, nor reveal
 One hope, while *thine* my fortunes seemed above,
Now we are equals in the gifts of earth—
 Now thou canst look around, and see the young,
 The fair, the noble, at thy feet again;
 And *now* I kneel to thee, and own the dearth
 Of all earth's gifts if thou art woo'd in vain.
 Belov'd one—speak! Not mine the silver tongue,
 Nor the gay mien, that soul through sense can chain;
 But in this voice my heart speaks man's true love,
 And on these lips there never smiled deceit;
 And in thy faith all that survive above
 The work-day world, as in Elysium, meet;—
 Hope, joy, ambition—thou! oh, thou, their last retreat!
 Wilt thou be mine?"

She could not speak for tears.

How, in that hour, the generous hand that blest
 The sire, could she reject? That sire she hears
 Murmur, "May *she* repay thee!" Can she feel
 No softness melt the memory from her breast?
 "If I could make thee happy,"—thus she said,
 And ceased;—her sentence in his eyes she read;—
 Eyes that all joy, how rashly form'd! reveal;
 And on that passive hand his lips have press'd the seal.

PART III.

I.

AND now the Past must be a blank to thee,
 Beautiful Constance! never more return
 To the deserted hearths of Memory—
 Wake not the embers from their funeral urn!—

Thy hand is plighted to another! O'er
The starry Future fix thine onward gaze!
He, thy affianced, well may merit more
Than thankless Hymen to man's hope repays.
And well and nobly, but with woman's weakness,
She strove the ancient idol to replace;
And if she grieved, the grief so seemed the meekness,
That even love the shadow could not trace:
But when alone! oh, *then* to muse—to start,
To hear the conscience task the bleeding heart!
Ah, what a world were this, if all were known,
And smiles in crowds were traced to tears alone!
Oft, when she heard the soul of her Betroth'd
Whisper its happy trust in her true love,
How the deceit appall'd her; how she loath'd
The lying mask, the bitter truth above!
And oft she yearn'd to speak, and to confess,
And, had he seemed less lofty to her eye,
All had been told: but she could not repress
The awe that chilled her when his step drew nigh;
His virtues still his foes, and to her fear,
His gentlest smiles had something of severe.

II.

Pass by some weeks: to London Seaton went,
His genius glorying in its wonted vent;
New props are built, and new foundations laid,
And once more rose thy crowded temple, Trade!
Then back the sire and daughter bent their way;
There, where the troth was pledged, let Hymen claim the day!
And with them came a maiden of the years
That Constance told—the friend of days gone by;
Together had they known the pangless tears,
And the gay smiles of Life's fresh April sky;
Shared the same toys in childhood, shared the same
Dreams of young love, while love was still a name;

Together knelt at night and happy morn
 By the same couch, in self-forgetful prayer—
 Prayer but for *others* ;—for the earth had borne
 Flowers for themselves, unconscious of a thorn ;
 And not as yet, vexing the rosy air,
 The storm the spirit to the port had driven,
 But joy it was—not grief—link'd the light heart to Heaven !
 And Juliet knew the Past ; in her alone
 Sought Constance comfort in the present pain ;
 To her the Future as the past was known,
 With her, thought wandered o'er the old domain,
 With her, Compassion, stronger than Despair,
 Pray'd for *his* bliss, whose lot she might not share ;
 Pray'd—though in prayer she wept—some happier maid
 Might soothe the heart her falsehood had betray'd.
 These made their commune, when the secret night
 Beheld them in their chamber, side by side ;
 While he, the Affianced, in that starry light,
 By the hush'd margin of the whispering tide,
 Brushing the dew, with unseen steps, would steal,
 And dream, as lovers dream, the love *she* did not feel !

III.

Meanwhile, to England Harcourt's steps return'd,
 And Seaton's new-born state the earliest news he learn'd—
 What the emotions of this injured man ?
 He had a friend—and thus his letter ran :
 “ Back to this land, where Merit starves, obscure,
 Where Wisdom says—‘ Be anything but poor,’
 Return'd,—my eyes the path to wealth explore,
 And straight I hear—‘ Constance is rich once more !’
 Thou know'st, my friend, with what a dexterous craft
 I 'scap'd the cup a tenderer Dupe had quafft ;
 For in the chalice Misery holds to life,
 What drop more nauseous—than a dowerless wife ?
 Yet she was fair, and gentle, charming—all
 That Man would make his partner—at a bail !

And, for the partner of a life, what more?—
 Plate at the board, a porter at the door!
 Love does not thrive on mutton, when 'tis cold—
 The Zone of Venus, trust me, was of gold.
 Yes, she was rich, and oh, I loved her well;—
 The wealth grew doubtful—fainter grew the spell;
 The wealth was lost—Love vanish'd with the ore;
 Plutus returns—lo, Cupid as before!
 'But how,' thou ask'st, 'will one, how soft see'er,
 List to the Lover, voiceless for a year?
 And how explain—how'—Why impute to thee
 Questions whose folly thy quick glance can see;
 Who loves is ever glad to be deceived—
 Who lies the most is still the most believed.
 Somewhat I trust to Eloquence and Art,
 And where these fail—thank Heaven, she has a heart!
 More it disturbs me that some rumours run,
 That Constance, too, can play the faithless One;
 That, where round pastoral meads blue streamlets purl,
 Chloe has found a Thyrsis—in an Earl!
 And oh, that Ruthven! Hate is not for me;
 Who loves not, hates not—both bad policy!
 Yet *could* I hate, through all the earth I know
 But that one man my soul could honour so.
 Thro' ties remote—by some Scotch grandam's side—
 We are, if scarce related, yet allied;
 And had his Mother been a barren dame,
 Harcourt's had been his heritage and name;
 Nay, if he die without an heir, ev'n yet—
 Oh, while I write, perchance the seal is set!
 Farewell!—a letter speeds to her retreat
 The prayer that wafts her Harcourt to her feet,
 There to explain the past—his faith defend,
 And claim, et cetera—Yours, in haste, my friend!
 P. S.—Thou lik'st Térésè—she's somewhat in my way—
 Wilt thou accept her? She look'd well to-day."

IV.

To Constance came a far less honest scroll,
Yet oh, each word *seem'd* vivid from the soul !
Fear, hope—reports that maddened, yet could stir
No faith in one who ne'er could doubt of her ;
Wild vows renewed—complaints of no replies
To lines unwrit—the Eloquence of Lies !
And more than all, the assurance, still too dear,
Of Love surviving that vast age—a year !
Such were the tidings to the Maiden borne,
And—woe the day—upon her BRIDAL MORN !

V.

It was the loving twilight's rosiest hour,
The Love-star trembled on the ivied tower,
As through the frowning archway pass'd the bride,
With Juliet, whispering courage, by her side;
For Ruthven went before, that first of all
His voice might welcome to his fathers' hall.
There, on the antique walls, the lamp from high
Showed the stern wrecks of battle-storms gone by ;
Gleam'd the blue mail, indented with the glaive,
Droop'd the dull banner, breezeless, on the stave ;
Below the Gothic masks, grotesque and grim,
Carved from the stonework, like a wizard's whim,
Hung the accoutrements that lent a grace
To the old warrior-pastime of the chace ;
Cross-bows, by hands, long dust, once deftly borne ;
The Hawker's glove, the Huntsman's soundless horn ;
On the huge hearth the hospitable flame
Lit the dark portrait in its mouldering frame ;
There many a Knight, in many a field renown'd
On their new daughter from their silence frown'd ;
To the young stranger, shivering to behold,
The Home she entered seem'd the tomb of old.

VI.

“Doth it so chill thee, Constance?—dare I own
The charm that haunts what childhood’s years have known;
How many dreams of fame beyond my sires
Wing’d the proud thought that now no more aspires!
Here, while I paced, at the dusk twilight time,
As the deep church-bell toll’d the curfew chime,
In the dim Past my spirit seemed to live,
To every relic some weird legend give,
And muse such hopes of glorious things to be,
As they, the Dead, mused once;—wild dreams—*fulfilled in thee!*”

Ah, never in those early visions shone,
A face so sweet, my Constance, as thine own!
And what if all that charm’d me then depart,
Clear, through the fading mists, smiles my soft heav’n—thy heart!

What, drooping still! Nay, love, we are not all
So sad within, as this time-darkened hall.
Come!”—and they passed (still Juliet by her side)
To a fair chamber, deck’d to greet the bride.
There, all the later luxury lent its smile
To cheer, yet still beseem, the reverend pile.
What though the stately tapestry met the eyes,
Gay were its pictures, brilliant were its dyes;
There, graceless cressets from the gilded roof,
In mirrors glass’d the landscapes of the woof,
There, in the Gothic niche, the harp was placed,
There ranged the books most hallowed by her taste;
Through the half-open casement you might view
The sweet soil prank’d with flowers of every hue;
And on the terrace, crowning the green mountain,
Gleam’d the fair statue—played the sparkling fountain—
Within, without, all plann’d, all deck’d to greet
The Queen of all—whose dowry was deceit!

Soft breathed the air, soft shone the moon above—
 All, save the bride's sad heart, whispering Earth's hymn to
 Love!

As Ruthven's hand sought hers, on Juliet's breast
 She fell; and passionate tears, till then suppress'd,
 Gush'd from averted eyes. To him the tears
 Betrayed no secret that could rouse his fears—
 For joy, as grief, the tender heart will melt—
 The tears but proved how well his love was felt!
 And, with the delicate thought that shunn'd to hear
 Thanks for the cares, which cares themselves endear,
 He whispered—"Linger not!" and closed the door,
 And Constance sobbed—"Thank Heaven, alone with thee
 once more!"

VII.

Back to his hall, Lord Ruthven's steps repair,
 Proud of the pomp that love hath come to share;
 With a light step the solemn floors he strode,
 And his glad heart from its full deeps o'erflowed.
 He, too, had thanks, than hers more meet for heaven—
 Lo, to his lonely ark, the Dove was given!
 Above the deluge of the Past around,
 Rose the bright refuge-hill with morning crown'd;
 And girdling heaven, though based upon the wild,
 The rainbow arch of God's glad Promise smil'd.
 He passed the porch, he gained the balmy air—
 Still crouch the night-winds in their forest lair;
 The moonlight silvers the unrustling pines,
 On the hushed lake the trembling glory shines;
 A stately shadow o'er the crystal brink,
 Reflects the shy stag as it halts to drink;
 And the slow cygnet, where it midway glides,
 Breaks into sparkling rings the faintly heaving tides.
 Wandering along his boyhood's haunts, he mused;
 The hour, the heaven, the bliss his soul suffused;
 It seemed all hatred from the world had flown,
 And left to Nature, Love and God alone!

Ev'n holiest passion, holier rendered there,
His every thought breath'd gentle as a prayer.

VIII.

Thus as the eve grew mellowing into night,
Still from yon lattice stream'd the unwelcome light—
'Why loitering yet, and wherefore linger I?'
And at that thought ev'n Nature pall'd his eye;
He missed that voice, which with low music fill'd
The starry heaven of the rapt thoughts it thrill'd;
He gain'd the hall—the lofty stair he wound—
Behold, the door of his heart's fairy-ground!
The tapestry veil'd him, as its folds, half raised,
Gave to his eye the scene on which it gazed.
Still Constance wept—and hark! what sounds are those;
What awful secret those wild sobs disclose!—
"No! leave me not!—I cannot meet his eyes!
O God! must life be ever one disguise!
What seem'd indifference when we pledged the truth,
Now grown—O wretch!—to terrors that but loathe!
O that the earth might swallow me!" Again
Gush forth the sobs, which Juliet soothes in vain.
"Nay, nay, be cheered—we must not more delay;
Cease these wild bursts till I his steps can stay;
No, for thy sake—for thine—I must be gone."
She 'scaped the circling arms, and Constance wept alone!

IX.

By the opposing door, from that, unseen,
Where Ruthven stood, behind the arras-screen,
Pass'd Juliet. Suddenly the startled bride
Look'd up, and lo, the Wrong'd One by her side!
They gazed in silence face to face; his own
Sad, stern, and awful, chill'd her heart to stone.
At length the low and hollow accents stirr'd
His blanching lip, that writhed with every word:
"Hear me a moment, nor recoil to hear;
A love so hated wounds no more thy ear—

I thank thee—I—!" His lips would not obey
 His pride,—and all the manly heart gave way.
 Low at his feet she fell : the altered course
 Of grief ran deepening into vain remorse.
 "Forgive me!—O forgive!"

"Forgive!" he cried,
 And passion rushed in speech, till then denied.
 "Forgive! O woman! Through the years we live,
 Each hour a torture, earth a hell!—Forgive!
 Thou dost not know the ruins thou hast made.
 Faith in *all* things thy falsehood has betrayed!
 Thou, the last refuge, where my baffled youth
 Dream'd its safe haven, murmuring—'Here is Truth!'
 Thou, in whose smile I garnered up my breast,
 Exult! thy fraud surpasses all the rest.
 No! close, my heart—grow marble! Human worth
 Is not;—and falsehood is the name for earth!"

X.

Wildly, with long, disordered strides, he paced
 The floor, to feel the universe a waste;
 For, as the earth, if God were not above,
 Man's hearth! without the Lares—Faith and Love!
 But what his woe to hers?—for him, at least,
 Conscience was calm, though every hope had ceased.
 But she!—all sorrow for herself had paused
 To live in that worse anguish she had caused.
 "No, Ruthven, no! Thy pardon not for me;
 But, oh, that Heaven may shed its peace on thee.
 So worthless I, so worthless thy regret;
 O, that repentance could requite thee yet!
 O, that a life that henceforth ne'er shall own
 One thought, one wish, one hope, but to atone,—
 Obedience, honour—"

"These may make the wife
 A faultless statue :—love but breathes the life!
 Poor child! Nay, weep not; bitterer far, in truth,
 Than mine, the fate to which thou doom'st thy youth.

For manhood's pride the love at last may quell,
 But when could Woman with Indifference dwell?
 No sorrow soothed, no joy enhanced since shared—
 O Heaven—the solitude thy soul has dared!
 But thou hast chosen! Vain, for each, regret.
 All that is left—to seem that we forget;
 No word of mine my wrongs shall e'er recall;
 Thine, wealth, and pomp, and reverence!—take them all!
 May they console thee, Constance, for a heart
 That—but enough! So let the loathed depart!
 These chambers thine—my step invades them not;
 Sleep, if thou canst, as in thy virgin cot.
 Henceforth all love has lost its hated claim;
 If wed, be cheer'd; our wedlock but a name.
 Much as thou scorn'st me, know this heart above
 The power of beauty, when disarm'd of love:
 And so—may Heaven forgive thee!”

“Ruthven stay!

Generous—too noble; can no distant day
 Win *thy* forgiveness also, and restore
 Thy trust, thy friendship, ev'n though love be o'er?”
 He paused a moment, with a softened eye,
 “Alas, thou dread'st, while thou ask'st, reply.
 If ever, Constance, that blest day should come,
 When crowds can teach thee what the loss of Home;
 If ever, when with those who court thee there,
 The love that chills thee now thou canst compare,
 And feel that if thy choice thou couldst recall,
 Him now unlov'd, thy love would choose from all;
 Why then, one word, one whisper!—oh, no more!”
 And fearful of himself, he closed the door!

PART IV.

I.

Ah, yes, Philosopher,* thy creed is true!
 'Tis our own eyes that give the rainbow's hue;

* Berkeley.

What we call **MATTER**, in this outer earth,
 Takes from our senses, those warm dupes, its birth.
 How fair, to sinless Adam, Eden smil'd ;
 But sin brought tears, and Eden was a wild !
 Man's soul is as an everlasting dream,
 Glassing life's fictions on a phantom stream :
 To-day, in glory all the world is clad—
 Wherefore, O Man ?—because thy heart is glad !
 To-morrow, and the selfsame scene survey—
The same ! Oh ! no—the pomp hath passed away !
 Wherefore the change ? *Within*, go ask reply—
 Thy heart hath given its winter to the sky !
 Vainly the world revolves upon its pole ;—
 Light—Darkness—Seasons—these are in the soul !

II.

“Trite truth,” thou sayest—well, if trite it be,
 Why seek we ever from ourselves to flee ?
 Pleased to deceive our sight ; and loth to know
 We bear the climate with us where we go !

To that immense Bethesda, whither still
 Each worst disease seeks cures for every ill,—
 To that great well, in which the Heart at strife,
 Merges its own amidst the common life,—
 Whatever name it take, or Public Zeal,
 Or Self-Ambition—still as sure to heal,
 From his sad hearth, his sorrows Ruthven bore ;—
 Long shunn'd the strife of men, now sought once more.
 Flock'd to his board, the Magnates of the Hour,
 Who clasp for Fame, its spectre-likeness—Power !
 The busy, babbling, talking, toiling race—
 The Word-besiegers of the Fortress—Place !
 Waves, each on each, in sunlight hurrying on,
 A moment gilded—in a moment gone ;
 For Honours fool but with deluding light,
 The place it glides through—not the *wave*—is bright ! *

* Schiller.

The means, if not his ends, with these the same,
 In Ruthven, Party hail'd a leader's name!
 Night after night, the listening Senate hung
 On that rous'd mind, by Grief to Action stung!
 Night after night, when Action, spent and worn,
 Left yet more sad the soul it had upborne;
 The sight of Home the frown of Life renew'd—
 The World gave Fame, and Home a Solitude!

III.

And Constance!—ever from that fearful hour
 In which her conscience saw her crime unveil'd,
 Her nature ripen'd to the loftier power,
 From which the fancy of her girlhood quail'd.
 The abandon'd Past, a cloud-wrapt land became,
 Before whose portals gleam'd a Seraph's sword,
 And the high name of WIFE, though but a name,
 Awed back the tempting shadows with a word!
 A graver, mightier, and more solemn sense,
 Of all that hallows woman's holiest tie,
 Woke in the woman's soul, and call'd from thence
 Armies in Thought against the Memory;
 And now, in truth, she could with crowds compare
 Him who had chosen one so ill-requiting;
 She saw him noblest of the noble there;
 All eyes commanding, and all ears delighting!

'Twas a new world to her, that crowning flower
 Of all which rank amidst its best can find,
 That dazzling circle—Genius, Wit, and Power,
 The focus of an empire's mingled mind;
 And, midst them all, what name than his more high?
 What form more princely?—oh, what soul so bright?
 By slow degrees in crowds he fix'd her eye,
 And when he went, what star was left to Night?

IV.

Alas! 'twas never, save in crowds, they met,
 They who, from crowds, should so have hail'd retreating;

But never Love, by trysting greenwood yet,
 More yearn'd than they, for that so cheerless meeting ;
 And if the eye encountered, or a word
 Of the one voice were, though at distance, heard—
 Oh! could the other but have seen the cheek
 Flush with emotions Pride forbade to speak,
 Or heard, amidst the formal sounds of greeting,
 The pulse, ev'n for such sounds, with joy, yet sadness, beating !
 But woe, when once the confidence of hearts
 Pledged at the shrine, is rent in storm away—
 When lip to lip no more the soul imparts,
 And love, if felt, shrinks timorous from the day !
 Man's pride in him—and fear and shame in her,
 The modest instinct, the abash'd remorse,
 Still kept them silent; and the deeps that stir
 To the one sea, through darkness take their course.
 “ His love is lost for ever,” still she sigh'd,
 When his calm brow the strife beneath belied ;
 And, with the fever of that wretched mirth
 Which never takes from happiness its birth,
 She seem'd the gayest of the group to shine—
 “ Heartless!” he murmured, “ why should I repine ?”

V.

The world look'd on, and construed, as it still
 Interprets all it knows not—into ill.
 The church's ground by daylight we revere—
 Let darkness come—what phantoms in our fear !
 So in the holiest shade will Slander mark
 Ghosts in each tomb—all Hades in the dark !
 “ Was ever lord, so newly wed, so cold ?—
 Poor thing !—forsaken ere a year be told !
 Doubtless, some wanton—true, we know not who—
 But those proud sinners are so wary too !
 Oh ! for the good old days—we never heard
 Of men so shocking under George the Third !”
 So ran the gossip. With the gossip, came
 The brood it hatch'd—consolers to the dame.

The soft and wily woers, who begin
 Through sliding pity, the smooth ways to sin,
 My lord is absent at the great debate,
 Go, soothe the lady's unprotected state—
 Go, Lechery—go, and wish the cruel Heaven
 To thee such virtue, now so wrong'd, had given !
 Yes, round her flock'd the young world's fairest ones,
 The soft Rose-Garden's incense-breathing sons :
 Roused from his calm, Lord Ruthven's watchful eye
 Mark'd the new clouds that darken'd round his sky,
 And raptur'd saw—though for his earth too far—
 How fleets and fades each cloud before that stainless Star.

VI.

Now came the graver trial, though unseñ
 By him who knew not where the grief had been—
 He knew not that an earlier love had steel'd
 Her heart to his—that curse, at least, conceal'd ;
 Enough of sorrow in his lonely lot,
 The why—what matter ?—that she loved him not !

One night, when Revel was in Ruthven's hall,
 He neared the brilliant cynosure of all :
 “ Deign” (thus he whisper'd) “ to receive with grace
 Him who may hold the honours of my race :—
 When the last Ruthven dies, behold his heir !”
 He said. She turn'd—O Heaven !—and Harcourt there !
 Harcourt, the same as when her glance he charmed,
 For deeper conquest, by compassion arm'd ;
 The same, save where a softer shadow, cast
 O'er his bright looks, reflected the sad Past !
 Now, when unguarded and in crowds alone,
 The Future dark—the household gods o'erthrown ;
 Now, when those looks, (that seem, the while they grieve,
 Ne'er to reproach)—can pity best deceive ;
 The sole affection she of right can claim
 Now, Virtue, tremble not—the Tempter came !

VII.

He came, resolved to triumph and revenge—
 Sure of a heart whose sorrow spoke no change ;
 Pleased at the thought to bind again the chain—
 For they who love not, still can love to reign ;
 Calm in the deeper and more fell design
 To sever those whom outward fetters join—
 To watch the discord scandal rumours round,
 Fret every sore, and fester every wound ;
 Could he but make Dissension firm and sure,
 Success would render larger schemes secure ;—
 “ *Let Ruthven die but childless !* ”—ran his prayer,
 And in the lover’s sigh, cold avarice prompts the heir.

He came, and daily came, and daily schemed—
 Soft, grave, and reverent, but the friend he seemed.

These distant cousins, from their earliest days,
 To different goals had trod their varying ways :
 If Ruthven oft with generous hand supplied
 Those wants call’d luxuries—wants they are to pride—
 Yet gifts are sometimes as offences viewed,
 And envy is the mean man’s gratitude ;
 And, truth to own, whate’er the one bestow’d,
 More from his own large, careless nature flow’d
 Than through the channels tenderer sources send,
 When favour equals—since it asks a friend.
 But Ruthven loved not, in the days gone by,
 The cold, quick shrewdness of that stealthy eye,
 That spendthrift recklessness, which still was not
 The generous folly which itself forgot.
 As snows enrich the soil they freeze, who knows
 How much the flowers have cause to thank the snows ?
 You love the spendthrift—you the miser loathe,
 Yet oft the clockwork is the same in both :
 Ope but the works—the penury and excess
 Chime from one point—the central selfishness :—

And though men said (for those, who wear with ease
The vulgar vices, seldom much displease,)

“ His follies injure but himself alone !”

His follies spared no welfare but his own :

Mankind he deemed the epitome of self,

And never laid *that* volume on the shelf.

Somewhat of this had Ruthven mark'd before—

Now he was less acute, or Harcourt more—

The first, absorb'd in sorrow or in thought ;

The last in craft's smooth lessons deeper taught.

Not over anxious to be undeceived,

Ruthven reform in what was not believed ;

They held the same opinions in the state,

And were congenial—in the last debate ;

Harcourt had wished to join the patriot crew,

Who botch our old laws with a patch of new ;

Ruthven the wish approved, and found the seat—

And so the Cousins' union grew complete.

Well, then, at board behold the constant guest,

With love as yet by eyes alone express ;

From the past vows he dared not yet invoke

The ancient Voice—yet of the past he spoke.

Whene'er expected least, he seemed to glide

A faithful shadow to her haunted side.

But why relate how men their victims woo?—

He left undone no art that can undo.

VIII.

And what deem'd Constance now, that, *face to face*,

She could the contrast of the Portraits trace?—

Could list, when Ruthven dream'd not that she gave

Heed to the themes for Beauty's ear too grave—

To that harmonious soul, where never aught

Of mean made discord in its lyre of thought ?

And then from Ruthven turn to hear that voice

Which *once* had all Earth's music for her choice,

Murmur the small talk, minced to please the fair—
 Both fed and coloured by each change of air—
 Wing the light jest on Lady Mary's gown,
 Hunt the last slander through the maze of Town;
 Or pausing, fearful lest it seem too glad,
 Whisper the sentiment it means for sad;
 That sort of sentiment—that tinsel sort
 Of Man makes up—half-earnest and half sport :—
 The sport is in the prettiness of phrase,
 The earnest in the poison it conveys;
 Something at once effeminate and bold—
 The actor's foil, the gallery takes for gold—
 The tricks of words which soft-tongued Vices teach,
 To their best skill'd Man-Milliner of Speech;
 All this had duped her in the early prime,
 When balls are epochs—suit they now the time?
 Who shall decide? This truth, at least be told—
 She grew more thoughtful, and her lord more cold.

PART V.

I.

The later Summer in that Second Spring
 Which August pours from Amalthæan horn—
 When the turf glistens with the Fairy ring,
 And the fields ripple with the gleam of corn—
 When from the oak and elm a livelier green
 New shoots put forth—when o'er the brooks, that run
 With fresher glee, the Moonlight's mellowest sheen
 Sleeps in the midnight, glorious as a sun—
 When o'er the margin of the Lake, the leaves
 Of the Waves' Queen, the Water-lily, float
 Tremulous, and the new-fledged goldfinch weaves
 The airy meshes of his earliest note—
 The later summer shone on Ruthven's towers—
 To Ruthven's towers the Lord and Wife returned,
 With a long train of guests to cheer the hours:—
 Harcourt with these, and Seaton, (who had learned

Enough to rouse him from his dreams of trade)
 To watch the misery that himself had made.
 Now, never from that first and fatal night,
 Did Constance counsel from one breast invite ;
 Mute ev'n to Juliet of that gloomy scene,
 His wrongs, at least, a sacred trust had been ;
 And Juliet now, and had for months been gone,
 To milder climates with a dying mother,
 Nor grieved the Wife to weep, and guard, alone,
 The solemn tale vouchsafed not to another,
 And least to Seaton :—from his eyes she sought
 Now, as before, to veil her every care ;—
 With a gay smile she warded off each thought
 That strove the secret (*some* there seemed) to share ;
 But when the Father, trembling, saw once more
 The fatal Harcourt ever by her side,
 And Ruthven —oh, how altered from of yore !
 The cold-eyed Lord of the neglected bride,
 Then, half in wrath and half in fear, his breast
 Doubtful to warn, (for warning oft but speeds
 The very peril, which when once exprest
 Becomes familiar, till its dread recedes,
 And, from weak tears refresh'd, burst forth the poison seeds,)
 To Ruthven's halls he came, resolved to know
 Whose first the wrong, or wherefore sprung the woe ;
 And if the Husband could his trust forsake,
 One hand should guard, one vigil be awake.

II.

Meantime the cheek of Constance lost its rose,
 Food brought no relish, slumber no repose—
 The wasted form pined hour by hour away,
 But still the proud lip struggled to be gay ;
 And Ruthven still the proud lip could deceive,
 Till the proud man forgot the proud in smiling grieve !

III.

In that old pile there was a huge square tower,
 Whence looked the Warder in its days of power :

Still, in the arch below, the eye could tell
Where on the steel-clad van the grim portcullis fell;
And from the the arrow-headed casements, deep
Sunk in the walls of the abandoned keep,
The gaze look'd kingly in its wide command
O'er all the features of the subject land.
From town and hamlet, copse and vale, arise
The hundred spires of Ruthven's Baronies;
And town and hamlet, copse and vale, around,
Its arms of peace the azure Avon wound.

IV.

A lonely chamber, in this rugged tower,
The lonely Lady made her favourite bower—
From her more brilliant chambers crept a stair,
That, through a waste of ruin, ended there;
And there, unseen, unwitness'd, none intrude,
Or vex the spirit from the solitude.
How, in what toil, or luxury of the mind,
Could she the solace or the lethe find?—
Music or books?—nay, rather, might be guess'd
The art her maiden leisure loved the best;
For there the easel and the hues were brought,
Though all unseen the fictions that they wrought.
Harcourt, more bold, the change in Constance made—
Sure, Love lies hidden in that depth of shade!
That cheek how hueless, and that eye how dim,—
“Wherefore,” he thought, and smiled, “if not for him?”
More now his manner and his words, disarm'd
Of their past craft, the anxious Sire alarm'd.
True, there was nought in Constance to reprove;
But still, what hypocrite like lawless love?—
More close his watch. One evening as he stood,
Pensive, within the casement's arch'd recess,
Unseen, he heard the words that chill'd his blood,
And left him little save the worst to guess.

'Tis Constance answering, in a faltering tone,
Some suit; and what,—was, by the answer, shown.

“Yes! in an hour,” it said.—“Well, be it so.”—

“The place!”—“Yon keep.”—Thou wilt not fail me!”—

“No!”

'Tis said;—she first, then Harcourt, quits the room.

“Would,” groaned the sire, “my child were in the tomb!”

He gasp'd for breath, the fever on his brow—

Was it too late? What boots all warning now?

If saved to-day—to-morrow—and the same

Danger and hazard! Oh, when lost the shame,

Virtue has nought to guard except the name!

V.

Sickening and faint, he gained the outer air,

And on the marge of the far-gleaming lake,

The melancholy master, musing there,

He saw reclined, with an unconscious eye,

Watching the wavelets, as they breathe and break

Upon the gentle shore. Then hurriedly

The Father hastened to the idler's side,

And touch'd.—“O guardian of a soul!” he cried,

“Dreamer, or Dullard, wilt thou never wake?”

Ruthven looked up, and rose, and coldly eyed

The father's flushing cheek and heaving breast.

“Dares he complain,” he thought, “or she confide?”

“Well, sir!” he said, “I listen for the rest.”

VI.

Seaton was one in whom, in common hours,

The World was strong: he lived in its loud life,

A homely man of strong, keen, hardy powers,

Pleas'd in its joys, exulting in its strife:

He revered Gold, not for the end so much

As for the stirring means by which 'tis won;

And to the crowd, his plain, blunt bearing such

As the crowd hails in Labour's simple son.

Thus men esteem'd him of the common clay,
 Whose bridled passions sober thought obey ;
 A worldly, cool, and calculating brain,
 His heart a compass, and the needle, gain.
 But now all self, all prudence swept away,
 The MAN'S great nature leapt into the day :
 He stretch'd his arms, and terrible and wild,
 His voice went forth—"I gave thee, Man, my child !
 I gave her young and innocent—a thing
 Fresh from the Heaven, no stain upon its wing ;
 One form'd to love, and to be loved ; and now,
 (Few moons have faded since the solemn vow,)
 How do I find thou hast discharged the trust ?
 Account !—nay, frown not—to *thy God* thou must !
 Pale, wretched, worn, and dying :—Ruthven, still
 These lips should bless thee, couldst thou only kill.
 But is that all ? Thou lead'st the unhonour'd bride
 Into the snares :—*thou* sworn from snares to guide !
 Thou leav'st a girl—a child—a lonely one,
 Forsaken, scorned—*thy* victim if undone—
 Thou leav'st her daily, hourly, to compare
 With thine *his* love—with thy contempt, *his* care !
 Oh, if the lightning blast thee, I the sire,
 Tell thee thy heart of steel attracts the fire ;
 Hadst thou but loved her, that meek soul I know—
 Know all—". His passion faltered in its flow ;
 He paused an instant, then before the feet
 Of Ruthven fell. "Have mercy ! Save her yet !
 Take back thy gold : say, did I not endure,
 And can again, the burthen of the poor ?—
 But *she*,—the light, pride, angel, of my life—
 God speaks in me—O husband, save thy wife !

VII.

"Save ! and from whom, old Man ?" Yet as he spoke
 A gleam of horror on his senses broke ;
 "From whom ? What ! knowest thou not who made the first,
 Though fading, fancy, youth's warm visions nurst,

This, Harcourt—this—' he stopp'd abrupt—appall'd!
 Those words how gladly had his lips recall'd;
 For at the words—the name—all life seem'd gone
 From Ruthven's image:—as a shape of stone,
 Speechless and motionless he stood! At length
 The storm suspended burst in all its strength:
 "And this to me—at last to *me!*" he cried,
 "Thine be the curse, who hast love to hate allied;
 Why, when my life on that one hope I cast,
 Why didst thou chain my future to her past—
 Why not a breath to say, 'She loved before;'
 Pause yet to question, if the love be o'er!
 Didst thou not know how well I loved her?—how
 Worthy the Altar was the holy vow,
 That in the wildest hour my suit had known,
 Hadst thou but said, 'Her heart is not her own.'
 Thou hadst left the chalice with a taste of sweet,
 I—I had brought the Wanderer to her feet—
 Had seen those eyes through grateful softness shine,
 Nor turn'd—O God!—with loathing fear from mine;
 And from the sunshine of her happy breast,
 Drawn one bright memory to console the rest!—
 But now, thy work is done—*till* now, methought,
 There was one plank to which the shipwreck'd caught;—
 Forbearance—Patience, might obtain at last
 The distant Haven—see! the dream is past—
She loves another! In that sentence—hark
 The crowning thunder!—the last gleam is dark;
 Time's wave on wave can but the more dissever;
 The world's vast space one void for ever and for ever!"

VIII.

Humbled from all his anger, and too late
 Convinced whose fault had shaped the daughter's fate,
 The Father heard;—and in his hands he veil'd
 His face abash'd, and voice to courage fail'd;
 For how excuse—and how console?—and so,
 As when the tomb shuts up the ended woe,

Over that burst of anguish closed the drear
 Abyss of silence—sound's chill sepulchre !
 At length he dared the timorous looks to raise,
 But gone the form on which he feared to gaze.
 Calm, at his feet, the wave crept murmuring ;
 Calm sail'd the cygnet with its folded wing ;
 Gently above his head the lime-tree stirr'd,
 The green leaves rustling to the restless bird ;
 But he who in the Beautiful of Life,
 Alone with him should share the heart at strife,
 Had left him there to the earth's happy smile—
 Ah ! if the storms within earth's calmness could beguile !

IX.

With a swift step, and with disordered mind,
 Through which one purpose still its clew could find,
 Lord Ruthven sought his home. “Yes, mine no more”—
 So mused his soul. “To hope or to deplore ;
 No more to watch the Heart's Aurora break
 O'er that loved face the light to life to speak—
 No more, without a weakness that degrades,
 Can fancy steal from Truth's eternal shades !
 Yes, we must part ! But if one holier thought
 Still guards that shrine my fated footsteps sought,
 Perhaps, at least, I yet her soul may save,
 And leave her this one hope—a husband's grave !”

Home gained—he asks—they tell him—her retreat !
 He winds the stairs—and midway halts to meet
 His rival passing from that mystic room,
 With a chang'd face, half sarcasm and half gloom—
 Writhed Ruthven's lip—his hands he clenched—his breast
 Heaved with man's natural wrath : the wrath the man suppress.
 “Her name, at least, I will not make the gage
 Of that foul strife—whose cause a husband's rage ;”
 So with the calmness of his lion eye,
 He glanced on Harcourt and he pass'd him by.

X.

And now he gains, and pauses at the door—
 Why beats so loud the heart so stern before!
 He nerved his pride—one effort, and 'tis o'er.
 Thus, with a quiet mean, he enters:—There
 Kneels Constance—yonder—Dare she kneel in prayer?
 What object doth that meek devotion chain,
 In you dark niche?—Before his steps can gain
 Her side, she starts—confus'd, dismay'd and pale,
 And o'er the object draws the curtain'd veil;
 But there the implements of art betray
 What thus the conscience dare not give to day.—
 A Portrait?—whose but his, the loved and lost,
 Of a sweet Past the melancholy ghost?
 So Ruthven guess'd—more dark his visage grown,
 As thus he spoke:—“Once more we meet alone!
 Once more—be tranquil—hear me! not to' upbraid,
 And not to threat, thy presence I invade;
 But if the pledge I gave thee I have kept,
 If not the Husband's rights the Wife hath wept,
 If thou hast shared whatever gifts be mine—
 Wealth—honour—freedom—all unbought, been thine—
 Hear me—O hear me, for thy father's sake!
 For the full heart that thy disgrace would break!
 By all thine early innocence—by all
 The woman's Eden—withered with her fall—
 I, whom thou hast denied the right to guide,
 Implore the daughter—not command the bride—
 Protect—nor only from the sin and shame—
 Protect from slander—thine—*My Mother's*—name!—
 For *hers* thou bearest now!—and in her grave
 Her name thou honourest, if thine own thou save!
 I know thou lov'st another!—Dost thou start?
 From him, as me—the time hath come to part;
 And ere for ever I relieve thy view,
 The one thou lov'st must be an exile too.

Be silent still, and fear not lest my voice
 Betray thy secret—Flight shall seem *his* choice;
 A fair excuse—a mission to some clime
 Where—weep'st thou still?—For *thee* there's hope in time!
 This heart is not of iron, and the worm
 That gnaws the thought, soon ravages the form;
 And then, perchance, thy years may run the course
 Which flows through love undarken'd by remorse.
 And now, farewell for ever!" As he spoke,
 From her cold silence with a bound she broke,
 And clasped his hand—"O leave me not! or know
 Before thou goest, the heart that wronged thee so,
 But wrongs no more."

"No more?—O spurn the lie!

Harcourt but now hath left thee! Well—deny!"
 "Yes, he hath left me!"—"And he urged the suit
 That—but thou maddenest me!—false lips, be mute!"
 —"He urged the suit—it is for ever o'er;
 Dead with the folly youth's crude fancies bore.
 One word, nay less, one gesture, (and she blush'd,)
 Struck dumb the suit, the scorn'd presumption crush'd."
 —"What! and yon portrait curtained with such care?"—
 "There did I point, and say—'*My heart is there!*'"

XI.

Amazed, bewildered—struggling half with fear,
 And half delight—his steps the curtain near.
 He lifts the veil :—that face—IT IS HIS OWN!
 But not the face her later gaze had known,
 Not stern, nor sad, nor cold—but in those eyes,
 The wooing softness love unmix'd supplies;
 The fond smile beaming the glad lips above,
 Bright, joyous, tender, as when first he sighed—"I love."
 An instant mute—oh, canst thou guess the rest?
 The next his Constance clinging to his breast;
 All, from the proud reserve, at once allied
 To the Girl's modesty the Woman's pride,

Melting in sobs, and happy tears—and words
Swept into music from long-silent chords.
Then came the dear confession, full at last,
Then streamed life's Future on the fading Past;
And as a sudden footstep nears the door,
As a third shadow dims the threshold-floor—
As Seaton entering, in his black despair,
Pauses the tears, the joys, the heaven to share—
The happy Ruthven raised his princely head,
“Give her again—this day in truth we wed!”

And when the spring the earth's fresh glory weaves
In merry sunbeams and green quivering leaves,
A joy-bell ringing through a cloudless air,
Proclaims to Ruthven's hearth and halls—an heir!

THE LAY OF THE BEACON.

I.

How broad and bright athwart the wave,
Its steadfast light the Beacon gave!
Far beetling from the headland shore,
The rock behind, the surge before!
How lone and stern and tempest-seared,
Its brow to Heaven the turret reared!
Type of the glorious souls that are
The lamps our wandering barks to light,
With storm and cloud round every star,
The lone ones of the night!

II.

How dreary was that solitude!
Around it scream'd the sea-fowl's brood;
The only sound, amidst the strife
Of wind and wave, that spoke of life,
Except, when heaven's ghost-stars were pale,
The distant cry from hurrying sail.

From year to year the weeds had grown
 O'er walls slow-rotting with the damp ;
 And, with the weeds, decay'd alone,
 The Warder of the lamp.

III.

But twice in every week from shore
 Fuel and food the boatman bore ;
 And then so dreary was the scene,
 So wild and grim the warder's mien,
 So many a darksome legend gave
 Awe to that Tadmor of the wave,
 That scarce the boat the rock could gain,
 Scarce heav'd the pannier on the stone,
 Than from the rock and from the main,
 The' unwilling life was gone.

IV.

A man he was whom man had driven
 To loathe the earth and doubt the heaven ;
 A tyrant foe, (a friend in youth,)
 Had warped the law to blast the truth ;
 Stripp'd hearth and home, and left to shame
 The broken heart—the blacken'd name.
 Dark exile from the Eden, then
 He hail'd the rock, the lonely wild :
 Upon the man at war with men
 The frown of Nature smil'd.

V.

But suns on suns had roll'd away ;
 The frame was bow'd, the locks were grey ;
 And the eternal sea and sky
 Seem'd one still death to that dead eye ;
 And Terror, like a spectre, rose
 From the grim tomb of that repose.
 No sight, no sound, of human kind ;
 The hours, like drops upon the stone !
 What countless phantoms man may find
 In that dark word—"ALONE !"

VI.

Dreams of blue Heaven and Hope can dwell
With Thralldom in its narrowest cell ;
The airy mind may pierce the bars,
Elude the chain, and hail the stars :
Canst thou no drearier dungeon guess
In *space*, when space is loneliness ?
The body's freedom profits none ;
The heart desires an equal scope ;
All nature is a goal to one
Who knows nor love nor hope !

VII.

One day, all summer in the sky,
A happy crew came gliding by,
With songs of mirth, and looks of glee —
A human sunbeam o'er the sea !
“ O Warder of the Beacon,” cried
A noble youth, the helm beside,
“ This summer-day how canst thou bear
To guard thy smileless rock alone,
And through the hum of Nature hear
No heart-beat, save thine own ?”

VIII.

“ I cannot bear to live alone,
To hear no heart-beat, save mine own ;
Each moment, on this crowded earth,
The joy-bells ring some new-born birth ;
Can ye not spare one form—but one,
The lowest—least beneath the sun,
To make the morning musical
With welcome from a human sound ?”
“ Nay,” spake the youth — “ and is that all ?
Thy comrade shall be found.”

IX.

The boat sail'd on, and o'er the Main
The Awe of Silence closed again ;
But in the wassail hours of night,
When goblets go their rounds of light,
And in the dance, and by the side
Of her, yon moon shall mark his bride,
Before that Child of Pleasure rose,
The lonely rock—the lonelier one,
A haunting spectre—till he knows
The human wish is won !

X.

Low murmuring round the turret's base
Glides wave on wave, its gentle chase ;
Lone on the rock, the warder hears
The oar's faint music—hark it nears—
It gains the rock ; the rower's hand
Aids a grey, time-worn form to land.
“ Behold the comrade sent to thee ! ”
He said—then went. And in that place
The Twain were left ; and Misery
And Guilt stood face to face !

XI.

Yes, face to face *once more* arrayed,
Stood the Betrayer—the Betray'd !
Oh, how through all those gloomy years,
When Guilt revolves what Conscience fears !
Had that wrong'd victim breath'd the vow
That, if but face to face—And now,
There, face to face, with him he stood,
By the great sea, on that lone steep ;
Around, the voiceless Solitude,
Below—a grave—the Deep !

XII.

They gazed—the Injurer's face grew pale—
 Pale writhe the lips, the murmurs fail,
 And thrice he strove to speak—in vain !—
 The sun looks blood-red on the main,
 The boat glides, waning less and less—
 No Law lives in the wilderness,

Except Revenge—man's first and last!

Those wrongs—that wretch—could they forgive?
 All that could sweeten life was past,
 Yet, oh, how sweet to live !

XIII.

He gazed before, he glanced behind,
 There, o'er the steep rock seems to wind
 The devious, scarce-seen path, a snake
 In slime and sloth might, labouring, make,
 With a wild cry he springs ;—he crawls ;
 Crag upon crag he clears ;—and falls
 Breathless and mute ; and o'er him stands,
 Pale as himself, the chasing foe—
 Mercy ! what mean those clasped hands,
 Those lips that tremble so ?

XIV.

“Thou hast curs'd my life, my wealth despoil'd ;
 My heart is cold, my name is soil'd ;
 The wreck of what was man, I stand
 'Mid the lone sea and desert land !
 Well, I forgive thee all ; but be
 A human voice and face to me !

O stay—O stay—and let me yet

One thing, that speaks man's language, know !—
 The waste hath taught me to forget
 That earth once held a foe !”

XV.

O Heaven ! methinks, from thy soft skies,
 Look'd tearful down the angel-eyes ;
 Back to those walls, to mark them go,
 Hand clasp'd in hand—the Foe and Foe !
 And when the sun sunk slowly there,
 Low knelt the prayerless man in prayer.
 He knelt, no more the lonely one ;
 Within secure, a comradè sleeps ;
 That sun shall not go down upon
 A desert in the deeps !

XVI.

He knelt—the man who half till then
 Forgot his God in loathing men,—
 He knelt, and pray'd that God to spare
 The Foe to grow the Brother there ;
 And, reconciled by Love to Heaven,
 Forgiving—was he not forgiven ?
 “ Yes, man for man thou didst create ;
 Man's wrongs, man's blessings can atone !
 To learn how Love can spring from Hate—
 Go Hate, and live alone.”

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD AND CONDORCET.

LED by the graces, through a Court he moved,
 “ All men revered him, and all women loved ”*—
 Happier than Paris, when to *him* there came
 The three Celestials—Learning, Love, and Fame ;
 He found the Art to soothe them all, and see
 The Golden Apple shared amidst the Three.

* “ The men respect you, and the women love you.”—Such was the subtle compliment paid by Prior to one equally ambitious of either distinction ; viz., Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke.

Yet he, this man, for whom the world assumed
 Each Rose that in Gargettian * gardens bloomed,
 Left to mankind a legacy of all
 That from Earth's sweetness can extract a gall.
 With him, indeed, poor Love is but a name—
 Virtue a mask—Beneficence a game.
 The Eternal Egotist, the Human Soul,
 Sees but in Self the starting-post and goal.
 Nipp'd in the frost of that cold, glittering air,
 High thoughts seem dwarf'd, and youth's warm dreams despair !
 He lived in luxury, and he died in peace,
 And saints in powder wept at his decease !
 Man loves this sparkling satire on himself ;—
 Gaze round— see Rochefoucauld on every shelf !

Look on the other ;—Penury made him sour,
 His learned youth the hireling slave of power ;
 His Manhood cast amidst the stormiest time,
 A hideous stage, half frenzy and all crime ;—
 Upon the Dungeon's floor of stone he died,
 With Life's last Friend, his Horace, by his side !
 Yet he—this Sage—who found the world so base,
 Left what ?—His “ Progress of the Human Race,”
 A golden dream of man without a sin ;
 All virtue round him, and all peace within !
 Man does not love such portraits of himself,
 And thrusts the unwelcome Flatterer from the shelf.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

I.

INTO my heart a silent look,
 Flashed from thy careless eyes,
 And what before was shadow, took
 The light of summer skies.

* Epicurean.

The First-born Love was in that look ;
The Venus rose from out the deep
Of those inspiring eyes.

II.

My life, like some lone solemn spot,
A spirit passes o'er,
Grew instinct with a glory not
In earth or heaven before.
Sweet trouble stirr'd the haunted spot,
And shook the leaves of every thought
Thy presence wandered o'er !

III.

My being yearned, and crept to thine,
As if in times of yore
Thy soul had been a part of mine,
Which claimed it back once more.
Thy very self no longer thine,
But merged in that delicious life,
Which made us ONE of yore !

IV.

There bloomed beside thee forms as fair,
There murmured tones as sweet,
But round thee breathed the' enchanted air,
'Twas life and death to meet.
And henceforth thou alone wert fair,
And, though the stars had sung for joy,
Thy whisper only sweet !

LOVE'S SUDDEN GROWTH.

I.

BUT yester-morn, with many a flower
The garden of my heart was drest ;
A single tree has sprung to bloom,
Whose branches cast a tender gloom,
That shadows all the rest.

II.

A jealous and a tyrant tree,
 That seeks to reign alone ;
 As if the wind's melodious sighs,
 The dews and sunshine of the skies,
 Were only made for One !

III.

A tree on which the Host of Dreams
 Low murmur mystic things,
 While Hopes, those birds of other skies,
 To Dreams themselves chant low replies—
 Ah, wherefore have they wings ?

IV.

The Seasons nurse the blight and storm,
 The glory leaves the air—
 The Dreams and Birds will pass away,
 The blossom wither from the spray—
 One day—the stem he bare ;—

V.

But mine has grown the Dryad's life,
 Coæval with the Tree.
 The sun, the frost, the bloom, the fall,
 My fate, sweet Tree, must share them all,
 To live and die with thee !

THE CONSOLATIONS OF SLEEP.

I.

COME to me, Night, that I with HER may be !
 For duly o'er the deep
 Of the moon-lighted sleep,
 Boundeth that Bark—the Soul, to reach
 Her presence by the lonely beach,
 Of some fair Dream, the Isle in that Enchanted Sea.

II.

Are ye *not* Isles of flowers and fairy ground,
Ye shadow-peopled Dreams !
Isles by whose lulling streams
And thick-leaved woods, the shapes we view,
We pined for most the daylight through,
Where Psyche nightly roves, and clasps her Eros found ?

III.

Come, Night, that I may be with HER once more
In the far land and lone,
Where she is all my own ;
Where, till the jealous day-star shine,
Beyond this life a life divine
Unites divided Souls along the Elysian shore !

THE LOVE LETTER.

As grains of gold that in the sands
Of Lydian waters shine,
The welcome sign of mountain lands
That veil the silent mine.

Thus may the River of my Thought,
That glideth now to thee,
Reveal the wealth as yet unwrought,
Which Love has heap'd in me !

So strove I to enrich the scroll
To thy dear hands consign'd ;
I thought to leave the lavish soul
No golden wish behind !

Ah, Fool ! to think an hour could drain
What life can scarce explore—
Enough, if guided by the grain,
Thy heart should seek the ore !

THE LAY OF THE MINSTREL'S HEART.

It was the time when Spring on Earth
 Gives Eden to the young ;—
 On Provence shone the Vesper star ;
 Beneath fair Marguerite's lattice-bar
 The Minstrel, Aymer, sung—

“ The year may take a second birth,
 But May is swift of wing ;
 The Heart whose sunshine lives in thee
 One May from year to year shall see ;—
 Thy love, eternal spring ! ”

The Ladye blush'd, the Ladye sigh'd,
 All Heaven was in that Hour !
 The Heart he pledged was leal and brave—
 And what the pledge the Ladye gave ?—
 —Her hand let fall a flower !

And when shall Aymer claim his Bride ?
 It is the Hour to part !
 He goes to guard the Saviour's grave ;—
 Her pledge, a flower, the Maiden gave,
 And *his*—the Minstrel's heart !

Behold, a Cross, a Grave, a Foe !
What else—Man's Holy Land ?
 High deeds, that level Rank to Fame,
 Have bought young Aymer's right to claim
 The high-born Maiden's hand.

High deeds should ask no meed below—
 Their guerdon in the sky !
 The poison-dart, in Victory's hour,
 Has pierced the Heart where lies the flower,
 And hers its latest sigh !

It is the time when Spring on Earth
Gives Eden to the young,
And harp and hymn proclaim the Bride,
Who smiles, Count Raimond, by thy side,—
The Maid whom Aymer sung !

And, darkly, through the wassail mirth,
A pale procession see !—
Turn, Marguerite, from the bridegroom turn—
Thine Aymer's heart,—the funeral urn,—
His pledge, comes back to thee !

Lo, on the Urn how wither'd lies
Thy gift—the scentless flower !
Amidst those garlands, fresh and fair,
That prank the hall and glad the air,
What does that wither'd flower ?

One tear bedew'd the Ladye's eyes,
No tears beseem the day.
The dead cannot to life return,
“ A marble tomb shall grace the Urn,”
She said, and turn'd away.

The marble rose the Urn above,
The World went on the same ;
The Ladye smil'd, Count Raimond's bride,
And flowers, like hers, that bloom'd and died,
Each May returning came.

The faded flower, the dream of love,
The poison and the dart,
The tearful trust, the smiling wrong,
The tomb,—behold, O Child of Song,
The History of thy Heart !

THE MASTER TO THE SCHOLAR.

WRITE for the pedant Few, the vein shall grow
Cold at its source and meagre in its flow ;
But for the vulgar Many wouldst thou write,
How coarse the passion, and the thought how trite !
“ Nor few nor many—riddles from thee fall ?”
Author, as Nature smiles—so write ;—for ALL !

THE BEAUTIFUL DESCENDS NOT.

IN Cyprus, looking on the lovely sky,
Lone by the marge of music-haunted streams,
A youthful Poet prayed—“ Descend from high,
Thou of whose face each youthful Poet dreams.
O Venus ! once more to the Earth be given
The Beauty that makes beautiful the Heaven.”

Swift to a silver cloudlet, floating o’er,
A rushing Presence rapt him as he pray’d.
What He beheld I know not ;—but once more
The midnight heard him sighing to the shade,—
“ Again—again unto the Earth be given
The Beauty that makes beautiful the Heaven.”

A sweet voice answered from the distant star—
“ Vainly did Venus grace on thee bestow—
Unworthy he the loftier realms afar,
Who woes the gods above to earth below ;
Rapt to the Beautiful thy soul must be,
And not the Beautiful debased to thee !”

THE BONES OF RAPHAEL.

WHEN the author was in Rome, in the year 1833, the bones of Raphael were discovered, and laid for several days in state in one of the churches.

WAVE upon wave, the human ocean streamed
 Along the chancel of the solemn pile ;
 And, with a softer day, the tapers beamed
 Upon the bier within the vaulted aisle :—
 And, mingled with the crowd, I halted there,
 And asked a Roman scholar by my side,—
 What sainted dust invok'd the common prayer ?
 “ Stranger !” the man, as in disdain, replied,
 “ Nine days already hath the Disinterred
 Been given again to mortal eye, and all
 The Great of Rome, the Conclave and the Pope,
 Have flock'd to grace the second funeral
 Of him whose soul, until it fled, like Hope,
 Gave Beauty to the World :—But haply thou,
 A dweller of the North, hast never heard
 Of one who, if no saint in waking life,
 In dreams communed with angels, and transferred
 The Heaven in which we trust his soul is now
 To the mute canvass.—Underneath that pall
 Repose the bones of Raphael !”—

Not a word

I answered, but in awe I drew more near,
 And saw the crowd toil on in busy strife,
 Eager which first should touch the holy bier ;
 I ask'd a boor more earnest than the rest,
 “ Whose bones are these ?”

“ I know not what his name ;

But, since the Pope and Conclave have been here,
 Doubtless a famous Saint !”—

The Boor exprest

The very thought the wandering stranger guest.

Which wiser, he, the Scholar, who had sneer'd
 To hear the Stranger canonize the Dead;
 Or they, the boor, the Stranger, who revered
 The Saint, where he the Artist?—Answer, Fame,
 Whose saints are not the Calendar's! Perchance
 Tasso and Raphael, age to age, have given
 The earth a lustre more direct from Heaven
 Than San Gennaro, or thy Dennis, France,
 Or English George!—Read History.*—

When the crowd

Were gone, I slipped some coins into the hand
 Of a grave-visaged Priest, who took his stand
 Beside the Bier, and bade him lift the shroud;
 And there I paused, and gazed upon the all
 The Worm had spared to Raphael.—He had died,
 As sang the Alfieri of our land,
 In the embrace of Beauty†—beautiful
 Himself as Cynthia's Shepherd!—That, the skull
 Once pillowed on soft bosoms, which still rise
 With passionate life, in canvass;—in the void
 Of those blank sockets shone the starry eyes,
 That, *like* the stars, found home in heaven! The pall
 With its dark hues, gave forth, in gleaming white,
 The delicate bones; for still an undestroy'd
 Beauty, amidst decay, appeared to dwell
 About the mournful relics; and the light,
 In crown-like halo, lovingly did fall
 On the broad brow,—the hush'd and ruined cell

* Gibbon, after a powerful sketch of the fraud, the corruption, and the vices of George the Cappadocian, thus concludes—"The odious stranger, disguising every circumstance of time and place, assumed the mask of a martyr, a saint, and a Christian hero; and the infamous George of Cappadocia has been transformed into the renowned St. George of England, the patron of arms, of chivalry, and the garter."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, vol. iv. c. xxiii.

† "Italian Beauty, didst thou not inspire
 Raphael, who died in thy embrace?"—BYRON.

Of the old Art—Nature's sweet Oracle !
 Believe or not, no horror seemed to wrap
 What has most horror for our life—the Dead :
 The sleep slept soft, as in a mother's lap,
 As if the Genius of the Grecian Death,
 That with a kiss inhaled the parting breath,
 That, wing'd for Heaven, stood by the charnel porch,
 Low'ring, with looks of love, the' extinguished torch,
 Had taken watch beside the narrow bed ;
 And from the wrecks of the beloved clay
 Had scared, with guardian eyes, each ghastrier shape away !

Come, Moralist, with truths of tritest worth,
 And tell us how " to this complexion " all
 That beautify the melancholy earth
 " Must come at last ! " The little and the low,
 The mob of common men, rejoice to know
 How the grave levels with themselves the great :
 For something in the envy of the small
 Still loves the vast Democracy of Death !
 But flatter not yourselves—in death the fate
 Of genius still divides itself from yours :
 Yea, ev'n upon the earth ! For Genius lives
 Not in your life—it does not breathe your breath,
 It does not share your charnels ;—but ensures
 In death itself the life that life survives !
 Genius to you what most you value gave,
 The noisy forum and the glittering mart,
 The solid goods and mammon of the world,
 In *these* your life—and *these* with life depart !
 Grudge not what Genius to itself shall claim—
 A life that lived but in the dreams of Art,
 A world whose sunshine was the smile from Fame.
 These die not, Moralist, when all are hurl'd,
 Fasces and sceptre, in the common grave :—
 Genius, in life or death, is still the same—
 Death but makes deathless what Life asked—THE NAME.

THE LADY AND THE DOGS.

FROM THE FABLIAUX.

Sir Gawaine now his bride had won, and side by side they rode
To where from Carduel's stately towers the Dragon-banner
flowed ;

With loving looks and sweet discourse the bridegroom cheered
the way,

When, " Oh," the lady cried, " my dogs, my darlings, where
are they ?"

Back Gawaine rides, and gains the gates, (the dogs were left
behind,)

God's wot, may ladies newly wed a Gawaine ever find !

Then to the Fair he spurs with speed ; the Fair delighted sees
Her favourites' white and dappled hues come gleaming through
the trees ;

And on they ride, and on they ride, when in the darksome
wood

Before them, arm'd from head to foot, a sturdy stranger stood.

With iron hand he rudely seized the lady's bridle rein ;

Out flash'd the sword, out spake the wrath, of that good
knight, Gawaine.

" Though mine be but the silken vest, and thine the iron mail,
A loyal heart can guard its prize, whatever foes assail ;
So foot to foot, and steel to steel"—

" Nay," quoth the Stranger Knight,

" Not thine by choice this Damsel, if I read her eyes aright ;
What need of blows ? No lady's smile can lure us back to life—
Let her who is the cause, herself, in peace decide the strife ;
Retire we both a certain space, and leave the Lady free,
And whomsoe'er her steps shall seek, his prize the Lady be."

" Content," Sir Gawaine gaily said ; " the world will pass away
Before that heart forsakes the faith it vowed to me to-day."

On either side the Knights retire, the Lady rests between,
She eyes the Stranger's rusted mail, Sir Gawaine's silken sheen,

A laidley, grim, rough-bearded carle the stranger was to view,
 A comelier knight than Gawaine ne'er the Bower of Beauty
 knew :—

With wistful gaze she looked, compared, and weighed and
 scanned them o'er,

Then slowly paced to choose the man she ne'er had seen before.
 Amazement first, and then disdain, struck dumb Sir Gawaine's
 voice ;

He turned his steed, and calmly left the Lady to her choice.
 But scarce some thirtyroods or so, the Knight had gone, before
 He heard the ring of hoofs, and lo, that cursed carle once
 more !

“The Dogs,” he cried, “the dogs, for thine, have left their
 Lady's side—

Give back the Dogs !”

“My learned friend,” the brideless
 Knight replied,

“By thee, but now, 'twas argued well, to leave the Lady free;
 So leave the Dogs, and whom they choose, his prize the Dogs
 shall be.”

Ill could the carle, with just reply, that just demand refuse :
 They both retire, and call the brutes :—*the brutes* no stranger
 choose.

By many a gentle word and deed, their grace the Knight had
 won,

When, through whate'er she loved, his love had woo'd that
 faithless one.

“Friend,” quoth the Knight, “I thank thee for the truth
 thou hast taught to me ;

In turn these faithful hounds may teach a lovelier truth to thee.
 Each day beholds a woman's heart from one to other range,
 Each day on friendship's brow beholds the clouds that tell of
 change ;

And ever to our grave we trace the sad and weary way,
 By smiles or tears, as fleet as those which mark the April day,
 But never yet, in all the books the wisest sage has read,
 Can it be found the Dog deserts the hand that gives it bread,”

He said, and called the Dogs, and rode upon his careless way;
 Back went the Stranger to the Fair—no doubt he was as gay;—
 But which the lot to envy most, ye married men decide—
 The happy bridegroom got the Dogs—that wretched man the
 Bride!

LOVE AND FAME.

I.

It was the May when I was born,
 Soft moonlight through the casement streamed
 And still, as it were yester-morn,
 I dream the dream I dreamed.
 I saw two forms from Fairy Land,
 Along the moonbeams gently glide,
 Until they halted, hand in hand,
 My infant couch beside.

II.

With smiles, the cradle bending o'er,
 I heard their whispered voices breathe—
 The one a crown of diamond wore,
 The one a myrtle wreath;
 "Twin brothers from the Better Clime,
 A Poet's spell hath lured to thee;
 Say which shall, in the coming time,
 Thy chosen Fairy be?"

III.

I stretched my hand, as if my grasp
 Could snatch the toy from either brow;
 And found a leaf within my clasp,
One leaf—as fragrant now!
 If both in life may not be won,
 Be mine, at least, the gentler brother—
 For he whose life deserves the one,
 In death may gain the other.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE EYES.

THOSE eyes—those eyes—how full of heaven they are,
 When the calm twilight leaves the heaven most holy,
 Tell me, sweet eyes, from what divinest star,
 Did ye drink in your liquid melancholy?
 Tell me, beloved Eyes?

Was it from yon lone orb, that ever by
 The quiet moon, like Hope on Patience, hovers,
 The Star to which hath sped so many a sigh,
 Since lutes in Lesbos hallowed it to lovers?
 Was that your Fount, sweet Eyes?

Ye Sibyl Books, in which the truths foretold,
 Inspire the Heart, your dreaming Priest, with gladness,
 Bright Alchemists that turn to Thoughts of Gold
 The leaden cares ye steal away from sadness,
 Teach only me, sweet Eyes!

Hush! when I ask ye how, at length, to gain
 The cell where Love the Sleeper yet lies hidden,
 Loose not those arch lips from their rosy chain;
 Be every answer, save your own, forbidden—
 Feelings are words for Eyes!

LOVE'S EXAGGERATIONS: A DEFENCE.

THE passion of the mightiest shell
 That ever wrapt the choir above,
 Were all too weak and cold to tell
 The warm extravagance of love.

Thought's deepest mines the soul will seek,
 Or speed to Fancy's airiest height,
 In search of aught that best can speak
 The Symbol-Worship of Delight.

Image far-wrought and rich conceit,
 Familiar to its household tongue ;—
 So the same purple thoughts we meet
 By Avon or Ilissus sung.*

In every land, Love's language still
 A sacred learning to the few ;
 A folly to *their* solemn skill,
 Who hold the Real for the True ;—

Fount of the lavish, joyous youth,
 It sports with every star above ;
 Give sober words to meaner truth,
 The wildest to the truths of Love ?

DOUBT.

BRIGHT laughs the sun, the Birds that are to Air
 Like Song to Life,—are gaily on the wing,
 In every mead the handmaid Hours prepare
 The delicates of Spring ;—†
 But, if she love me not !

To me at this fair season still hath been
 In every wild-flower an exhaustless treasure,
 And, when the young-eyed violet first was seen,
 Methought to breathe was pleasure ;—
 But, if she love me not !

How, in thy twilight, DOUBT, at each unknown
 Dim shape, the superstitious Love will start ;
 How Hope itself will tremble at its own
 Light shadow on the heart ;—
 Ah, if she love me not !

* Compare the well-known extravagance—
 "O, that I were a glove upon that hand,"
 with a similar thought in Anacreon, Od. xx.

† "The choicest delicates from yonder mead."

Well ; I will know the worst, and leave the wind
 To drift or drown the venture on the wave ;
 Life has two friends in grief itself most kind—
 Remembrance and the Grave—
 Mine, if she love me not !

THE ASSURANCE.

I ~~AM~~ loved, I am loved—Jubilate !
 Hark ! hark ! how the happy note swells,
 To and fro from the fairy bells,
 With which the Flowers melodiously
 To the banquet-halls invite the bee !
 He is loved, he is loved—Jubilate !

The echo at rest on her mountain-keep,
 Murmurs the sound in her broken sleep—
 He is loved, he is loved—Jubilate !
 And those gossips, the winds, have come to scout
 What the earth is so happy about,
 And they catch the sound, and circle it round—
 He is loved, he is loved—Jubilate !

And the Rivers, whom all the world must know,
 Were in love with the stars ever since they could flow,
 With a dimpled cheek and a joyous sigh,
 Whisper it up to the list'ning sky,
 He is loved, he is loved—Jubilate !

It is not the world that I knew before ;
 Where is the gloom that its glory wore ?
 Not a foe could offend, or a friend betray,
 Old Hatred hath gone to his grave to-day !
 Hark ! hark, his knell we toll,
 Here's to the peace of his sinful soul !
 On the earth below, in the heaven above,
 Nothing is left us now but love.
 Love, love, honour to love,
 I am loved, I am loved—Jubilate !

THE MAIDEN'S GRAVE.

A TALE.

"YONDER distant hill," said Hyppolyte, "is called the grave of Krak, whom History mentions as the first King of Poland; but the other, which is nearer to us, and looks so dismal, is called the Sepulchral Monument of his daughter Vanda. An early love had united the hearts of Vanda, Queen of Poland, and of Ritiger, Duke of Arkona, in the Isle of Rugen. However, when the murder of a brother, and the punishment which befell the guilty, called the daughter of Krak to the throne, the Sarmatian nation disapproved the alliance of their Queen with a foreigner, and the call of Duty proved stronger than the voice of Love," &c.—BRONIKOWSKI's Court of Sigismund Augustus, translated by Count Kucinski, vol. i. p. 59.

The concluding portion of the History of Vanda is related in the following Poem.

SEEST thou yon twain opposing steep's?

No wild-flower glads their solemn gloom;
There old Sclavonia's hero sleeps,
And there his Hero-Daughter's tomb!

When careless youth is on the wing,
The heart but o'er the heart would reign—
She was the Daughter of a King—
She loved, and was beloved again!

And proud her choice, and fair her fate
Before her visions seem'd to smile;
What maid too high to be thy mate,
Young Prince of Rugen's Warrior-Isle?

Ah! not to Kaiser and to King
Hath Love his happy Eden sold;
The hearts that sleep beneath his wing,
The meanest hut hath space to hold! *

And joy, they weave their bridal wreath,
And joy, he comes to claim his own;—
And woe, she weeps a Brother's death,
And woe, she mounts a Brother's throne!

* "Raum ist in der kleinsten Hütte
Für ein glücklich liebend Paar."—SCHILLER.

Alas ! the Maiden Monarch now
The crown, and not the wreath, must wear ;
The crown that weighs above thy brow,
A stranger's temples may not bear !

The low need envy not the great
When Greatness is unshared with Love ;
The lonely heart in robes of state,—
The Orb unshadowed by the Dove !

But Vanda is a Hero's child,
The Mother of a Hero's land ;
They saw not—when the Martyr smil'd,²
And, calm, resigned the plighted hand,—

They saw not how, that smile below,
Realms fairer than Sarmatia lay,
A desert never more to know
The opening eyelids of the day !

Not Tadmor, in its lone repose,
Its wrecks to wandering eye reveals,
More sad amidst the waste—than those,
One broken human heart conceals !

“ Up, spear and lance, my Liegemen all !
My Lady's choice shall vassals bind ?
A Monarch's heart shall rebels thrall ?
No !—give my banners to the wind ! ”

Along yon valleys, sheen and far,
Arkona's steel-clad legions lay ;
And bright, beneath the steadfast star,
The River rush'd its glittering way.

From yonder cliff, whose gloom of shade
Half wrapt the starlight from the foe,
Sclavonia's Virgin Queen survey'd
The warfare and the peace below ;

She saw the pastoral huts, where beat
Brave hearts entrusted to her care ;
And, like their shrouds, beneath her feet
The ghastly war-tents whitening there

She saw the joyous River glide,
 With peaceful banks on either shore;
 To-morrow, and the starry tide
 Runs crimson with a people's gore!
 And, darkly fronting, looms the steep
 Where her great Father's dust is laid;
 And, waking from the' invaded sleep,
 His ghost seems frowning in the shade!
 Before her soul, as in her sight,
 The Lover's and the Country's Cause;—
 A Voice thrill'd though the sullen night—
 "Child of a Hero, canst thou pause?"
 High heaved her heart, and to her cheek
 A blush, half pride, half shame, was given;
 Calm through the blue eye seemed to break
 The thought that comes in light from Heaven.
 "Accept the sacrifice," she said,
 And raised her solemn arms on high;
 Why sudden droops that lofty head?—
 Where—the last weakness—turns the eye?
 One glance—but one, where, glittering, sleep
 The tents of that beloved Foe;—
 Flash'd the white robe—and from the steep
 She plunged into the stream below!
 The stream below received its prey,
 The starlight darkened from the wave;
 But Glory shall outlive the ray,
 And Memory is the Martyr's Grave! *

THE POET SINGS TO THE YOUNG.

A THOUGHT FROM HORACE.

"Virginibus — puerisque canto."

FAR hence, ye Herd Profane!—along
 These aisles each earthlier sound hath ceast;
 For Holy is the Altar-Song,
 And holy is the Poet-Priest!

* The story adds that the enemy retired.

Far hence, ye Herd Profane—oh, ne'er
For ye the Nine's melodious truth;
The Priest but calls around him, there,
The Virgin and the Soul of Youth.

The Godlike Hierophant conceals
From vulgar eyes the solemn rite;
But to the Pure alone reveals
The Eleusinia of Delight.

Yes, then along the charmed floor
The gods of old, descending, glide;
And mists o'er mortal eyes no more
Elysium from the Earth divide!

Priest-Poet, yes!—in every age
Virgin and Youth thine Audience be!
The pure alone can in thy page
The Vision and the Glory see!

Mourn not, if scorned by those who are
The vulgar herd *without* the shrine—
Through fogs and clouds, the Hesper Star
Disdains on troubled streams to shine;—

Its home, an unpolluted sky—
Its glass, O stillest wave thou art!
And still the gaze must turn on high,
To feel its influence on the heart!

So does the Poet, from the Hour
Escape unto the farther years;
That thou mayst almost doubt the power
Of Him the passing Hour reveres;—

From his lone height he sings to those
Who linger, Youth, in thy green vale—
A Fairy yet in every rose,
An Angel's wing in every gale.

They, the Endymions, o'er whose sleep
Watches the Moon's enamoured eye,—
The Ganymedes, for whom there sweep
God's eagles from the world on high,—

*They who yet dream, and yet aspire,—
For them, the holy chord is strung;—
Far hence, ye Herd Profane!—the lyre
Invokes the Virgin and the Young!*

EURIPIDES.

LONE, 'mid the loftier wonders of the Past,
Thou stand'st—more household to the modern age;—
In a less stately mould thy thoughts were cast
Than thy twin Masters of the Grecian stage.
Thou mark'st that change in Manners when the frown
Of the vast Titans vanish'd from the earth,
When a more soft Philosophy stole down
From the dark heavens to man's familiar hearth.
With thee, came Love and Woman's influence o'er
Her sterner Lord; and Poesy till then
A sculpture, warmed to Painting; * what before
Glass'd but the dim-seen Gods, grew now to men
Clear mirrors, and the Passions took their place,
Where a serene if solemn Awe had made
The Scene a Temple to the Elder Race:
The struggles of Humanity became
Not those of Titan with a God, nor those
Of the great Heart with that unbodied Name
By which our ignorance would explain our woes
And justify the Heavens,—the ruthless FATE;—
But truer to the human life, thine art
Made thought with thought and will with will debate,
And placed the God and Titan in the Heart;
Thy Phœdra, and thy pale Medea were
The birth of that more subtle wisdom, which
Dawn'd in the world with Socrates, to bear

* The celebrated comparison between Sculpture and the Antient, Painting and the Modern Dramatic Poetry, is not applicable to Euripides, who has a warmth and colour of passion which few, indeed, of the moderns have surpassed, and from which most of the modern writers have mediately, if not directly, borrowed their most animated conceptions.

Its last most precious offspring in the rich
 And genial soul of Shakspeare. And for this
 Wit blamed the living, Dullness taunts the dead.*
 And yet the Pythian did not speak amiss
 When in thy verse the latent truths she read,
 And hailed thee wiser than thy tribe.† Of thee
 All genius in our softer times hath been
 The grateful echo, and thy soul we see
 Still through our tears—upon the later Scene.
 Doth the Italian, for his frigid thought
 Steal but a natural pathos,—hath the Gaul
 Something of passion to his phantoms taught,
 Ope but thy page—and, lo, the source of all!—
 But that which made thee wiser than the Schools
 Was the long sadness of a much-wrong'd life;
 The sneer of satire, and the gibe of fools,
 The broken hearth-gods, and the perjured wife.
 For Sorrow is the Messenger between
 The Poet and Men's bosoms:—Genius can
 Fill with unsympathising Gods the Scene,
 But grief alone can teach us what is Man!

● * Among the taunting accusations which Aristophanes, in his Comedy of the Frogs, lavishes upon Euripides, through the medium of Æschylus, is that of having introduced female love upon the stage! Æschylus, indeed, is made, very inconsistently, considering his Clytemnestra, (Ran : 1, 1042) to declare that he does not know that *he* ever represented a single woman in love. At a previous period of the comedy, Euripides is also ridiculed, through a boast ironically assigned to his own lips, for having debased Tragedy, by the introduction of domestic interest—(household things, *οἰκία πράγματα*.) Upon these and similar charges have later critics, partly in England, especially in Germany, sought by duller diatribes to perpetuate a spirit of depreciation against the only antient dramatic poet who has vitally influenced the later stage. The true merit of Euripides is seen in the very ridicule of Aristophanes. There, may sound criticism find the answer to all his pedant detractors, from Longinus, who was almost as wretched a critic as, now-a-days, an English reviewer—to—but the sneerers of our own time have not even established the privilege to be named!

† “Wise Sophocles, wiser Euripides, wisest of all, Socrates,” was the well-known decision of the Delphian Oracle. Yet the wisdom of Euripides was not in the philosophical sentences with which he often mars the true philosophy of the drama. His wisdom is his pathos.

THE POPE AND THE BEGGAR.

The Desires the chains, the Deeds the wings.

I SAW a Soul beside the clay it wore,
 When reign'd that clay the Hierarch-Sire of Rome;
 A hundred priests stood, ranged the bier before,
 Within St. Peter's dome;

And all was incense, solemn dirge, and prayer—
 And still the Soul stood sullen by the clay:
 "O Soul, why to thy heavenlier native air
 Dost thou not soar away?"

And the Soul answered, with a ghastly frown,
 "In what life loved, death finds its weal or woe;
 Slave to the clay's DESIRES, they drag me down
 To the clay's rot below!"

It spoke, and where Rome's Purple Ones reposed,
 They lower'd the corpse; and downwards from the sun
 Both Soul and Body sunk—and Darkness closed
 Over that twofold one!

Without the church, unburied on the ground;
 There lay, in rags, a Beggar newly dead;
 Above the dust, no holy priest was found,
 No pious prayer was said!

But round the corps unnumbered lovely things,
 Hovering, unseen by the proud passers by,
 Form'd upward, upward, upward, with bright wings,
 A ladder to the sky!

"And what are ye, O Beautiful?" "We are,"
 Answered the choral cherubim, "His DEEDS!"
 Then his Soul, sparkling sudden as a star,
 Flashed from its mortal weeds,

And, lightly passing, tier on tier, along
 The gradual pinions, vanished like a smile!
 Just then, swept by the solemn-visaged throng
 From the Apostle's pile—

“ Knew ye this beggar ? ” “ Knew ! a wretch, who died
Under the curse of our good Pope, now gone ! ”
“ Loved ye that Pope ? ” “ He was our Church’s pride,
And Rome’s most holy Son ! ”

Then did I muse.—Such are men’s judgments ;—blind
In scorn or love ! in what unquest-of things,
DESIRES OR DEEDS—do rags and purple find
The fetters or the wings !

TALENT AND GENIUS.

(Suggested by a passage in Goëthe’s Correspondence with a Child.)

TALENT convinces—Genius but excites ;
This tasks the reason, that the soul delights.
Talent from sober judgment takes its birth,
And reconciles the pinion to the earth ;
Genius unsettles with desires the mind,
Contented not till earth be left behind ;
Talent, the sunshine on a cultured soil,
Ripens the fruit, by slow degrees, for toil.
Genius, the sudden Iris of the skies,
On cloud itself reflects its wondrous dies :
And, to the earth, in tears and glory, given,
Clasps in its airy arch the pomp of Heaven !
Talent gives all that vulgar critics need—
From its plain horn-book learn the Dull to read ;
Genius, the Pythian of the Beautiful,
Leaves its large truths a riddle to the Dull—
From eyes profane a veil the Isis screens,
And fools on fools still ask—“ what Hamlet means ? ”

THE TRUE CRITIC. •

TASTE is to sense, as Charity to soul,
A bias less to censure than to praise ;
A quick perception of the arduous whole,
Where the dull eye some careless flaw surveys

Every true critic—from the Stagirite
 To Schlegel and to Addison—hath won
 His fame by serving a reflected light,
 And clearing vapour from a clouded sun.
 Who envies him whose microscopic eyes
 See but the canker in the glorious rose?
 Not much I ween the Zoilus we prize,
 Though even Homer may at moments doze.
 Praise not to me the sharp sarcastic sneer,
 Mocking the Fane which Genius builds to Time.
 High works are Sabbaths to the Soul! Revere
 Ev'n some rare discord in the solemn chime.
 When on the gaze the Venus dawns divine,
 The Cobbler comes the slipper to condemn;
 The Slave alone descends into the mine
 To work the dross—the Monarch wears the gem.

GANYMEDE.

"When Ganymedes was caught up to Heaven, he let fall his pipe on
 which he was playing to his sheep."—ALEXANDER ROSS, *Myst. Peet.*

UPON the Phrygian hill
 He sate, and on his reed the Shepherd play'd;
 The noonbeam glinted thro' the greenwood shade,
 And every wind was still.

He saw not where, on high,
 The noiseless eagle of the Heavenly King
 Rested;—till rapt upon the rushing wing
 Into the opening sky.

Then, from this sad world freed,
 A destined God,—below his glance he cast,
 And felt how poor the music of the Past,
 And dropt the idle reed!

So he whom Thought divine,
 Bears to that life the calm Celestials know,
 Must for the' Empyreal Element resign
 All that seem'd sweet below!

MEMNON.

WHERE Morning first appears,
 Waking the rathe flowers in their Eastern bed,
 Aurora still, with her ambrosial tears,
 Weeps for her Memnon dead.

Him, the Hesperides
 Nurs'd on the margent of their golden shore,
 And still the smile that then the Mother wore
 Dimples the orient seas.

He died, and, lo! the while
 The fire consumed his ashes, glorious things,
 With joyous song and wonder-tinted wings,
 Rose from the funeral pile.

He died,—and yet became
 A music, and his Theban image broke
 Into sweet sounds that, with each sunrise, spoke
 The Mighty Mother's name.

Beautiful Parable!
 Typing in golden thoughts the death and birth
 Of that which glads and sanctifies the earth
 On which we dwell;—
 Leaving, in scatheless youth,
 A Music-Image, with enchanted voices
 Answering the Light that on his front rejoices—
 The Christian's Memnon-Truth!

MEMORIES, THE FOOD OF LOVE.

WHEN shall we come to that delightful day,
 When each can say to each, "*Dost thou remember?*"
 Let us fill urns with rose leaves in our May,
 And hive the thrifty sweetness for December!

For who may deem the Reign of Love secure,
 Till in a mighty Past is built his throne?—
 Hope is a star each vapour can obscure,
 Memory, the only empire, all our own.

'Tis the Hearts' Home to have a World in Time,
 Of Happy Thoughts that we have known before ;
 Hearing, in common words, the holy chime
 Of those sweet sabbath-bells—the dreams of yore.

Oft dost thou ask me, with that bashful eye,

“ If I shall love thee evermore as now ? ”

Feasting as fondly on the sure reply,

As if my lips were virgin of the vow ?

Sweet does that question, “ Wilt thou love me ? ” fall

Upon the heart that has forsworn its will ;

But when the words hereafter we recall,

“ *Dost thou remember ?* ”—shall be sweeter still !

LOVERS' QUARRELS—AN OLD MAXIM REFUTED.

THEY never loved as thou and I,

Who ministered the moral,

That aught which deepens love can lie

In true love's lightest quarrel.

They never knew, in times of fear,

The safety of affection,

Nor sought, when angry Fate drew near,

Love's Altar for protection ;—

They never knew how Kindness grows

A vigil and a care,

Nor watch'd beside the heart's repose

In silence and in prayer ;

For weaker loves be storms enough

To frighten back Desire ;

We have no need of gales so rough

To fan our steadier fire.

'Twere sweet to kiss thy tears away,

If tears those eyes must know ;

But sweeter still to hear thee say,

“ Thou never bad'st them flow.”

The wrongful word will rankling live
 When wrong itself hath ceast,
 And Love, that all things may forgive,
 Can ne'er forget the least.

If pain can not from life depart,
 There's pain enough around us ;
 The rose we wear upon the heart
 Should have no thorn to wound us.

And hollow sounds the wildest vow,
 If Memory wake, the while,
 The bitter taunt—the darkened brow,
 The stinging of a smile.

There is no anguish like the hour,
 Whatever else befall us,
 When One the heart has raised to power
 Exerts it but to gall us.

Yet if—this calm too blest to last—
 Some cloud, at times, must be,
 I'm not so proud but I would cast
 The fault alone on me.

So deeply blent with my dear thought,
 All faith in human kindness,
 Methinks if thou couldst change in aught,
 The only bliss were blindness.

But no—if Rapture may not last,
 It ne'er shall bring Regret,
 Nor leave one look in all the Past
 'Twere mercy to forget.

Repentance often finds too late,
 To wound us is to harden ;
 And Love is on the verge of Hate,
 Each time it stoops for Pardon.

THE ATHENIAN AND THE SPARTAN.

A DIALOGUE.

THE ATHENIAN.

STERN Prisoner in thy rights of old
 To Learning blind, to duty cold,—
 Never for thee, with garlands crown'd,
 The lyre and myrtle circle round ;
 Dull to the Lesbian ruby's froth,
 Thou revellest in thy verjuice broth.
 With Phidian art our temples shine,
 Like mansions meet for gods divine ;
 Thou think'st *thy* gods despise such toys,
 And shrines are made—for scourging boys ;
 As triflers, thou canst only see
 The Drama's Kings—our glorious Three.
 No Plato fires your youth to thinking,
 Your nobler school,—in Helots drinking !
 Contented as your sires before—
 The Little makes ye loathe The More.
 We, ever pushing forward, still
 Take power, where powerless, from the will ;
 We, ever straining at the All,
 With hands that grasp when feet may fall,*—
 Earth, ocean,—near and far,—we roam,
 Where Fame, where Fortune,—there a home !
 You hold all progress degradation,
 Improvement but degeneration,
 And only wear your scarlet coat
 When self-defence must cut a throat.
 Yet ev'n in war, your only calling,
 A snail would beat you best at crawling ;
 We slew the Mede at Marathon,
 While you were gazing at the moon ! †
 Pshaw, man, lay by these antique graces,
 True wisdom hates such solemn faces !

* Thucyd., lib. 1, c. 68—71. (Speech of the Corinthians.)

† Herod., lib. 6, c. 120.

Spartans, if only livelier fellows,
Would make ev'n us a little jealous!

THE SPARTAN, *calmly*.

Friend, Spartans when they need improvement
Take models not from endless movement.
We found our sires the lords of Greece;—
Ask'd why? this answer—"Laws and Peace."
Enough for us to hold our own;
Who grasps at shadows risks the bone.
You're ever up, and ever down,—
There's something fix'd in True Renown.
The New has charms for men, I'm told;
Granted,—but all our gods are old.
Better to imitate a god
Than shift like men.

THE ATHENIAN, *impatiently*.

You are so odd!

There is no sense in these laconics.
Ho, Dromio! bring my last Platonics.
This mode of arguing, though emphatic,
Is quite eclipsed by the Socratic.

SPARTAN.

Friend—

ATHENIAN.

You have said. Now listen! Peace

SPARTAN.

Friend—

ATHENIAN.

Gods! his tongue will never cease!
I tell you, man is made for walking,
Not standing still.

SPARTAN.

My friend—

ATHENIAN.

And talking!

Forward's my motto—life and motion!

SPARTAN.

Mine be the Rock, as thine the Ocean.

TIME.

Discuss, ye symbols of the twain
 Great Creeds—THE STEADFAST AND IMPROVING;
 The one shall rot that would remain,
 The one wear out in moving!

THE PHILANTHROPIST AND THE MISANTHROPE.

A DIALOGUE.

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

Yes, thou mayst sneer, but still I own
 A love that spreads from zone to zone;
 No time the sacred fire can smother!
 Where breathes the man, I hail the brother.
 Man! how sublime,—from Heaven his birth—
 The God's bright Image walks the earth!
 And if, at times, his footstep strays,
 I pity where I may not praise.

THE MISANTHROPE.

Thou lov'st mankind. Pray tell me, then,
 What history best excuses men?
 Long wars for slight pretences made,
 See murder but a glorious trade;
 Each landmark from the savage state,
 Doth virtue or a vice create?
 Do ships speed plenty o'er the main?—
 What swells the sail? The lust of gain!
 What makes a law where laws were not?
 Strength's wish to keep what Strength has got!
 If rise a Few—the true sublime,
 Who lend the light of Heaven to Time,
 What the return the Many make?
 See Athens' bowl! and Lisbon's stake!
 Thou lov'st mankind,—come tell me, then,
 Lov'st thou the past career of men?

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

Nay, little should I love mankind,

If their dark PAST my praise could find,
It is because—

THE MISANTHROPE.

A moment hold !

Enough gone times ; *our own* behold !
What lessons doth a past of woe
And crime upon our age bestow ?
How few amongst the tribes of earth
Are rescued from the primal wild ;
What countless lands the oceans girth,
By savage rites and gore defil'd !
Afric'— a mart of human flesh ;
Asia— a satrapy of slaves !
And yonder tracts from Nature fresh,
Worn empires fill with knaves ?
Nay ; turn to Europe's happier clime,
Ausonia see, a ruined realm !
A shipwreck in the storms of time,
With San Gennaro at the helm !
Say, did the latest Goth bequeath
To Spain a darker midnight than
Our eyes have seen in horror breathe
Along those fairest shores of man ?
Turn'st thou to France ?—in streams of gore,
The phantoms of thy folly see ;
The butcher-race the sophists bore
Were but—Philanthropists, like thee !
And for what end the ghastly shrouds,
The shatter'd thrones, the crimson'd ermines ?
New forts for kings to laugh at crowds,
A railway to St. Germain's !
Are men at home more good and wise ?
My friend, thou readst the daily papers ;
Perchance, thou see'st but laughing skies,
Where I but mists and vapours.
But much the same seems each disease.
What most improv'd ? The Doctor's fees !
The Law can still oppress the Weak,
The Proud still march before the Meek.

Still crabbed Age and heedless Youth ;
 Still Power perplex'd, asks "What is Truth ?"
 To no result our squabbles come :
 To some what's best is worst to some.
 The few the cake amongst them carve,
 The labourers sweat and poets starve ;
 And Envy still on Genius feeds,
 And not one modest man succeeds.
 All much the same for prince and peasant—
 I've done.—How dost thou love the PRESENT ?

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

'Tis not man's Present or man's Past ;
Beyond, man's friend his eye must cast.
 Must see him break each galling fetter ;
 To gain the best desire the better—
 From Discontent itself we borrow
 The glorious yearnings for the morrow ;
 Science and Truth like waves advance
 Upon the antique Ignorance.

THE MISANTHROPE.

Like waves—the image not amiss !
 They gain on that side—lose on this ;
 Pleased, after fifty ages, if
 They gulp at last an inch of cliff.

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

You really cannot think by satire,
 To mine the truths you cannot batter ;
 Man's destinies are bright'ning slowly,
 With them entwined each thought most holy.
 What though the PAST my horror moves,
 No Eden though the PRESENT seems,
 Who loves Mankind, their FUTURE loves,
 And trusts, and lives—

THE MISANTHROPE.

In dreams !

WISDOM.

In both extremes there seems conveyed,
 A truth to own, and yet deny ;
 But what between the extremes has made
 The master-difference ?

HOPE.

I!—

What wert thou, Wisdom, but for me?
 Though thou the Past, the Present see,
 Through **ME** alone the eye can mark
 The *Future* dawning on the dark.
 I plant the tree, and till the soil;
 I show the fruit,—where thou the toil;
 Where thou despondest, I aspire—
 Thine sad Content, mine bright Desire.
 Under my earthlier name of **HOPE**,
 The love to things unborn is given,
 But call me **FAITH**—behold I ope
 The sparkling gates of Heaven!
 Take **ME** from Man, and Man is both
 The Dastard and the Slave;
 And Love is lust, and Peace a sloth,
 And all the Earth a Grave!

TO A WITHERED TREE IN JUNE.*

DESOLATE tree, why are thy branches bare?
 What hast thou done,
 To win strange winter from the summer air,
 Frost from the sun?
 Thou wert not churlish in thy palmier year
 Unto the herd;
 Tenderly gav'st thou shelter to the deer,
 Home to the bird!
 And ever, once, the earliest of the grove,
 Thy smiles were gay;
 Opening thy blossoms with the haste of love
 To the young May.
 Then did the bees, and all the insect wings
 Around thee gleam;
 Feaster and darling of the gilded things
 That dwell i' the beam.

* These stanzas, and the lines that follow, called "The Last Separation," have been printed before.

Thy liberal course, poor prodigal, is sped!
 How lonely now!
 How bird and bee, light parasites, have fled
 The leafless bough!

Tell me, sad tree, why are thy branches bare?
 What hast thou done,
 To win strange winter from the summer air,
 Frost from the sun?

"Never," replied that forest hermit, lone,
 (Old truth and endless!)

"Never for evil done, but fortune flown,
 Are we left friendless.

"Yet wholly nor for winter, nor for storm
 Doth love depart:
 We are not all forsaken till the worm
 Creeps to the heart!

"Ah, nought without—within thee, if decay—
 Can heal or hurt thee!
 Nor boots it, if thy heart itself betray,
 Who may desert thee!"

THE LAST SEPARATION.

WE shall not rest together, love,
 When death has wrenched my heart from thine;
 The sun may smile thy grave above,
 When clouds are dark on mine!

I know not why, since in the tomb
 No instinct fires the silent heart—
 And yet it seems a thought of gloom,
 That we should ever part;

That, journeying through the toilsome past,
 Thus, hand in hand and side by side,
 The rest we reach should, at the last,
 The weary ones divide;

That the same breezes should not sigh
 The self-same funeral boughs among,—
 Nor o'er *one* grave, at daybreak, die
 The night-bird's lonely song!

A foolish thought!—for *we* are not
The things that rest beneath the sod—
The very shapes we wore forgot,
When near the smile of God.

A foolish thought, yet human, too!
For love is not the soul's alone :
It winds around the form we woo—
The mortal we have known !

The eyes that speak such tender truth—
The lips that every care assuage—
The hand that thrills the heart in youth,
And smoothes the couch in age ;

With these—*The Human*—human love
Will twine its thoughts and weave its doom,
And still confound the life above
With death beneath the tomb !

And who shall tell, in yonder skies,
What earthlier instincts we retain—
What link, to souls released, supplies
The old material chain ?

The stars that pierced this darksome state
May fade in that meridian shore ;
And human love, like human hate,
Be memory—and no more !

We will not think it : for in vain
Were all our dreams of heaven could show,
Without the hope to love again
What we have loved below !

But still the heart will haunt the well
Wherein the golden bowl lies broken,
And treasure, in the narrow cell,
The Past's most holy token !

Or wherefore grieve above the dead ?
Why bid the rose-tree o'er them bloom ?—
Why fondly deck their dismal bed,
And sanctify the tomb ?

'Tis through the form the soul we love ;—
 And hence the thought will chill the heart,
 That, though our souls may meet above,
 Our forms shall rest apart !

THE DESIRE OF FAME.

I do confess that I have wish'd to give
 My land the gift of no ignoble name,
 And, in that holier life, have sought to live
 Whose air, the Hope of Fame.

Do I lament that I have seen the bays
 Denied my own, not worthier brows above !
 Foes quick to scoff and friends afraid to praise ?—
 More active, Hate than Love !

Do I lament that roseate youth has flown
 In the hard labour grudged its niggard meed,
 And cull from far and juster lands alone
 Few flowers from many a seed !

No !—for whoever, with an earnest soul,
 Strives for some end from this low world afar,
 Still upward travels though he miss the goal,
 And strays—but towards a star !

Better than Fame is still the wish for Fame,
 The constant training for a glorious strife :—
 The Athlete, nurtured for the Olympian Game,
 Gains strength, at least, for Life.

He who desires the conquest over Time
 Already lives in some immortal dream,
 And the Thought glides beneath the' Ideal Clime
 With moonlight on its stream !

I thank thee, Hope, if vain, all blessed still,
 For much that makes the soul forget the clay ;
 The morning dew still balms the sadden'd hill,
 Though sun forsakes the day.

And what is Fame but Faith in holy things
 That soothe the life and shall outlive the tomb ?
 A reverent listening for some angel-wings
 That cower above the gloom ?

To gladden earth with beauty, or men's lives
 To serve with Action, or their souls with Truth—
These are the ends for which the Hope survives
 The' ignobler thirst of Youth.

And is not this a Sister-Hope with thee,
 Lovely Religion—foe alike to Time?
 Does not God's smile light Heaven, on earth to see
 Man's faith in ends sublime?

No!—I lament not—though these leaves may fall
 From the sear'd branches on the desert plain,
 Mock'd by the idle winds that waft—and all
 Life's blooms—(its last)—in vain.

If vain for others—*not* in vain for me!—
 Who builds an altar let him worship there!
 What needs the crowd?—though lone the shrine may be
 Not hallow'd less the Prayer!

Enough if, haply, in the after-days,
 When by the altar sleeps the funeral stone—
 When gone the mists, our wizard passions raise,
 And Truth is seen alone;

When Calumny its prey can wound no more,
 And fawns its late repentance on the dead—
 If gentle footsteps from some kindlier shore
 Pause by the narrow bed;

Or, if yon children, whose young sounds of glee
 Float to mine ear the evening gales along,
 Recall some echo, in their years to be,
 Of not all-perished song;

Taking some spark to glad the hearth, or light
 The student-lamp from now-neglected fires;
 And one sad memory in the Sons requite
 What—I forgive the Sires!

THE SEA-CAPTAIN;

OR,

THE BIRTHRIGHT.

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To thrive by the red sweat of his own merits."
MIDDLETON.

"Then triumph, Leon, richer in thy love
Than all the hopes of treasure."
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TO THE
EARL OF DURHAM

THE AUTHOR DEDICATES

THIS DRAMA;

A SLIGHT TRIBUTE OF ADMIRATION FOR

A CLASSICAL AND ACCOMPLISHED JUDGE

IN ARTS AND LETTERS;

AND A SINCERE MEMORIAL

OF PERSONAL RESPECT AND REGARD.

October 23, 1839.



PREFACE.

As in the “Lady of Lyons” an attempt was made to illustrate the Republican soldier of the Italian campaign, a character peculiarly French—so in this play the Author has sought to delineate a character not less especially English, viz., the early, and, if I may so speak, the aboriginal, Sea-Captain, with the same gay and prodigal contempt of the commonplace objects which landsmen covet and scheme for, that is still popularly attributed to his brethren, but with something also of the adventurous romance and poetic fancy with which the lingering chivalry of the Old World, and the first glimpses of the New, inspired the wild and gallant contemporaries of Walter Raleigh. The varieties of our peculiar civilisation can exhibit no individuality so strikingly and imperishably national as that which has been formed by the maritime spirit, and devoted to the maritime service, of our people. Perhaps, too, in no aspect is the English character so attractive and so noble as in the great exemplars and maintainers of our naval glory. Collingwood and Nelson were not more in deed than in thought the representatives and mirrors of a heroism loftier than that which is to be found in the portraits that, with harder outlines and half-fictitious colours, adorn the gallery of Plutarch. If the character I attempt to sketch is necessarily idealized by the poetry that belongs to the Drama, I trust that it is not the less essentially true to Nature; and that the Sea-Captain of Elizabeth’s day will not be deemed an unworthy likeness of the forerunners and heralds of the glorious race that commenced with Blake, and found their most illustrious archetype in the gentle and daring heart—in the patriotism, disinterested and sublime—in the valour that was ever merciful—in the ambition that was never base—in all the memories of devoted life and heroic death, which, age after age, shall render not less holy than unfading the laurel and the cypress upon the tomb of Nelson.

October 23rd, 1839.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA,

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET, OCTOBER 31st, 1830.

MEN.

LORD ASHDALE, son to Lady Arundel.	MR. J. WEBSTER.
SIR MAURICE BEEVOR, a reputed Miser, and though but distantly related to Lady Arundel, the Heir-at-Law to the Titles and Estates, sailing the children of the Countess.	MR. STRICKLAND.
NORMAN, the Captain of a Ship-of-War.	MR. MACREADY.
FAKNER, his friend and Lieutenant.	MR. HOWE.
ONSLow, a Village Priest.	MR. PHELPS.
GAUSSEN, a Pirate.	MR. O. SMITH.
LUKE, a Pirate.	MR. GALLOTT.
Servants, Sailors, Pirates, etc.	

WOMEN.

LADY ARUNDEL, a Countess in her own right.	MRS. WARNER.
VIOLET, her Ward, and cousin to Lord Ashdale by his father's side.	MISS H. FAUCIT.
MISTRESS PRUDENCE.	MRS. CLIFFORD.
SCENE,—The North of Devon.	
COSTUME,—Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign.	
Time occupied by the action, one day.	

THE SEA-CAPTAIN;

OR,

THE BIRTHRIGHT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The exterior of a small inn by the sea-coast; the Castle of Arundel at a distance; a boat drawn on the beach; a ship at anchor. The door of the inn is open, and discovers FALKNER and Sailors carousing within. Before a table in front of the stage—GILES GAUSSEN seated. Time, forenoon.

LANDLORD (*serving GAUSSEN, with a flask, &c.*).

If this be not the best Canaries on the coast, I give thee leave to drown me in my own butt. But it is dull work drinking alone, master;—wilt join the jolly fellows within?

GAUSSEN.

No.

LANDLORD.

A bluff customer. If his reckonings be as short as his answers, he is not likely to die in debt to his landlord.

[*Exit Landlord within the inn.*]

GAUSSEN.

Luke should be returned ere this; Sir Maurice would be eager eno' to see his old friend if he knew what news in the way of shot I carry in my locker. Humph! Sir Walter Raleigh is a great man—and introduced tobacco! (*smokes.*)

SAILORS (*within*).

Ha, ha!

GAUSSEN.

To the foul fiend with those drunken sailors! Had I known what kind of guests my fat landlord harboured I should hardly have put into this port: I hate honest men: what right have men to be honest and spoil other men's trade?

Enter LUKE.

Ha, Luke! what says the old knight?

LUKE.

Mighty little, but he is close at my heels. He carries back his own answer, to save portorage, I suppose. Thou mightst well call him a miser—not a tester for my trouble. His very face is like a board to warn men off the premises of his breeches' pockets.

GAUSSEN.

Where are our crew?

LUKE.

Rambling through the town yonder, and picking up stray news of what ships sail and what their cargo. They are keen scouts.

GAUSSEN.

Go, select twelve of the stoutest: stow them away in the sea-cave that I told thee of, below the castle yonder. I may find work for them ere nightfall.—Hark ye, Luke. If thou hadst done a man such wrong that thy life lay at his mercy, what wouldst thou?

LUKE.

Take the first dark night for a spring from the bush, and keep my knife ground.

GAUSSEN.

I like thy advice.—Hence!

[*Exit LUKE.*]

Enter SIR MAURICE.

SIR MAURICE.

What, Giles Gausсен—bully Gausсен, my heart of oak, how fares it? Why, it is ten years since we met. I thought thou wert in another land—(*Aside*) I wish thou wert in another world. You are a little altered—warlike wounds, eh? All for the better—more grim, terrible, manly, and seamanlike.

GAUSSEN.

I must thank the boy whom I took out to please thee for this gash across the brow.

SIR MAURICE.

Ugh! it is by no means a handsome keepsake, bully Gausсен. What, then? you are quits with him. You gave him a very large winding-sheet,—one that will not wear out this many a day, eh?

GAUSSEN.

No; he has escaped—he lives! I saw him yesterday—a day's journey hence. It is this which brings me hither. I have tracked news of him. He bears another name—Norman! He has a goodly ship of his own. Look yonder (*pointing to the ship*). Does this news open your purse-strings, Sir Maurice?

SIR MAURICE.

Thou traitor! Hadst thou not five hundred broad pieces—bright, new, gold broad pieces? I recollect the face of every one of them as if it were my own child's; and all, all, that thou mightst never say to me “He lives.”

GAUSSEN.

Hist!

Enter FALKNER and Sailors from the inn.

FALKNER.

Yes, steady, lads, steady. The Captain will be here anon—it is the hour he fixed. Avast there, messmate! Thou seem'st one of our cloth. Dost want a berth in the Royal Eliza, under the bold Captain Norman?

GAUSSEN (*aside to Sir MAURICE*).

Norman—you hear?

SIR MAURICE.

You serve under Captain Norman, worthy sir?—Do you expect him soon this way, worthy sir?

FALKNER.

This instant, worthy sir! I am his lieutenant, worthy sir. Faith, you shall drink his health.

SIR MAURICE.

Zounds, sir! what is his health to me? It is as much as a

man of my age can do to drink his own health. This way, Gausсен; quick—tell me more—tell me more. Good day to you, master lieutenant.

[Exeunt SIR M. and GAUSSEN.]

FALKNER.

Good day to you both—and an ill wind go with you! By the Lord, messmates, a man who refuses to drink, without a satisfactory explanation, is to my mind a very suspicious character.

SAILOR.

Hurrah for the Captain! hurrah!

Enter NORMAN.

NORMAN.

Well met, lads! beshrew me but the sound of your jolly welcome is the merriest music I've heard since we parted. Have ye spent all your doubloons?

FIRST SAILOR.

Pretty nearly, Captain.

NORMAN.

That's right—we shall be all the lighter in sailing! Away to the town—and get rid of these pieces for me. Off; but be back an hour before sunset.

[Exeunt Sailors.]

What should I do with all this prize-money
If it were not for those brave fellows?—faith,
They take a world of trouble off one's hands!
How fares it, Falkner?—thou hast seen thy home?—
All well?—

FALKNER.

All well! my poor old father, bless him,
Had known reverse—he tills another's land,
And crops had fail'd. Oh, man, I was so happy
To pour my Indian gold into his lap,
And cry "Your sailor son has come to drive
Want from his father's door!"

NORMAN.

That hour were worth
A life of toil!—well, and thy mother?—I
Have never known one—but I love to see

A man's eyes moisten and his colour change
When on his lips lingers the sweet name "MOTHER!"
Thy mother bless'd thee!

FALKNER.

Searce with words;—but tears
And lifted hands, and lips that smiled dear thanks
To the protecting Heaven—*these* bless'd me!

NORMAN.

Friend,

I envy thee!—

FALKNER.

Eno' of me—now for thyself, what news?
Thy Floweret of the West—thy fair betroth'd—
The maid we rescued from the Afric corsair
With her brave father—in the Indian seas—
Thou'st seen her?—

NORMAN.

No!—I had more wisely saved
My time and speed. Her sire is dead—the stranger
Sits at his hearth; and with her next of kin
Hard by this spot—this very spot, dear Falkner,
My Violet dwells: look where the sunlight gilds
The time-worn towers of stately Arundel—
Thither my steps are bound;—a happy chance
Our trysting place should have been chosen here!—
I'd not have gone one bow-shot from the path
That leads my soul to bask in Violet's eyes—
No, not for all the lands my journey traversed,
Nor—what is more—for the best ship that ever
Bore the plumed Victory o'er the joyous main.

[*Going out.*]

FALKNER.

Hold—but the priest, thy foster-father, Onslow—
Hast thou sought *him*?

NORMAN.

Thou dear old man, forgive me!
I do believe as whirlpools to the sea
Love is to life!—Since first I leapt on land
I have had no thought—no dream—no fear—no hope

Which the absorbing waves of one strong passion
 Have not engulfed !—Wilt serve me Falkner?—Bear
 This letter to the priest—the place inscribed
 Scarce two hours' journey hence;—say I will seek him
 Perchance this night—if not, the morrow's dawn.
 Let all good news be glad upon thy tongue—
 How I am well—strong—gay—how every night—
 Mark—tell him this—(good men at home are apt
 To judge us seamen harshly)—every night
 On the far seas his foster-son recall'd
 The words he taught my infant lips,—and pray'd
 Blessings on that grey head.

FALKNER.

I'll do thy bidding.

NORMAN.

So now to Violet.

FALKNER.

Hark !—thy men are true—
 Thy ship at hand : if she say “ay”—hoist sail,
 Off with the prize. I prithee, is she rich?—

NORMAN.

Her sire died poor—thank Heaven, she is *not* rich !

FALKNER.

I'm glad to hear it—Had she lands and beeves,
 And gold, you might forswear the sea.

NORMAN.

The sea !

No—not for Beauty's self ! the glorious sea—
 Where England grasps the trident of a god,
 And every breeze pays homage to her flag,
 And every wave hears Neptune's choral nymphs
 Hymn with immortal music England's name !—
 Forswear the sea ! My bark shall be our home ;
 The gale shall chaunt our bridal melodies ;—
 The stars that light the angel palaces
 Of air, our lamps ;—our floors the crystal deep
 Studded with sapphires sparkling as we pass ;—
 Our roof—all Heaven !—my Beautiful, my Own !
 Never did sail more gladly glide to port

Than I to thee! my anchor in thy faith,
And in thine eyes my haven.—

Farewell, Falkner.

[*Exeunt NORMAN and FALKNER at opposite sides.*]

SCENE II.

The Gardens of the Castle of Arundel.

Enter LADY ARUNDEL.

It is the day—now five-and-twenty years
Elapsed—the anniversary day of woe!
O Sun, thou art the all-piercing eye of Heaven,
And to thy gaze my heart's dark caves lie bare
With their unnatural secret.—Silence, Conscience!
Have I not rank—power—wealth—unstain'd repute?
So will I wrap my ermine round the past,
And—Ah—he comes! my son—my noble boy,
I see thee, and air brightens!—

LORD ASHDALE (*speaking without to Servants*).

Yes—old Rowland!—

And, stay, be sure the falcon which my Lord
Of Leicester sent me. We will try his metal.

Enter ASHDALE.

Good morrow, mother—Hum—methought that Violet
Were here! Well! what with *you* and Mistress Prudence,
That virgin legacy of starch and buckram
Which Violet's father (rest his soul!) bequeath'd her,
I might as well be cousinless.

LADY ARUNDEL.

My son,

She is no bride for Arundel's young heir.

ASHDALE.

Who spoke of brides?—Can we not gaze on Beauty
Save by the torch of Hymen?—To be gallant—
Breathe out a score of sighs, or vows, or sonnets—
Mirror the changes in that Heaven call'd "Woman"—
And smoothe our language to a dainty sadness;—
All this—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Is love!—

ASHDALE.

No—No—*amusement*, mother.

The pastoral recreation of the groves
Where birds and shepherds dissipate their dulness
By the sweet pastime amorous poets sing of.
You take this matter far too solemnly ;
I own I would abridge the days—the days (*yawning*)
Are wondrous lengthy in the country, mother—
By practising the bow of Cupid, just
To keep one's hand in, with my blush-faced cousin !
How does this plume become me ?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Well ! yet I

Would have it sweep less loosely.

ASHDALE.

Now-a-days

Our love is worn just as I wear this plume,
A glancing feather, gay with every wind
And playing o'er a light and giddy brain
Such as your son's—(*kissing her hand*)—Let the plume play,
sweet mother !

LADY ARUNDEL (*fondly*).

Ah ! Percy, Percy !

ASHDALE.

Well, I hear my steed
Neighing impatience, and the silver bells
On my dark falcon shaking their own gladness
Into the limber air ;—the sun will halt
Midway in heaven ere my return ; meanwhile,
If you would keep me faithful to your hand,
Give me my wings—in other words (now, frown not),
The court, the camp, or any life but this,
If my fair cousin saddens all my sunshine
With eyes so coldly gentle ;—fare you well.

[*Exit ASHDALE.*]

LADY ARUNDEL.

Too light—too vain for his ancestral honours—

And yet, what mother does not love her son
Best for the faults she chides in him?

Enter VIOLET and MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

My Violet,
Why still this pensive brow—this garb of grief?

VIOLET.

Lady, I am an orphan!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Nay, take comfort.—

Yet is there not a softer sorrow, Violet,
In thy meek eyes than that which bathes with tears
A father's holy urn? Thou turn'st away—
(*Angrily*)—Does thy gaze rove for Ashdale? Girl, beware—
The love that trifles round the charms it gilds
Oft ruins while it shines.

VIOLET.

You can speak thus,
Yet bid me grieve not that I am an orphan!

LADY ARUNDEL (*touched*).

Forgive me, I was hasty!—No, you do not—
Say it—you do not love my graceless Percy?

VIOLET.

You know that I have shunn'd him!—I am poor;
But Poverty is proud (*aside*), and Memory faithful.

LADY ARUNDEL (*as to herself*).

I have high hopes for Ashdale—bright desires—
Wild schemes—the last son of a race whose lords
Have sought their mates beside the hearth of kings,
He stands before me as a dream of glory,
Haunting some young ambition; and mine eyes
Pierce to the future, when these bones are dust,
And see him princeliest of the lion tribe
Whose swords and coronals gleam around the throne,
The guardian stars of the Imperial Isle.
Kings shall revere his mother!

Enter SIR MAURICE.

SIR MAURICE (*aside to LADY ARUNDEL*).

Hark! he lives!

LADY ARUNDEL.

He! who?

SIR MAURICE.

The young gentleman who stands between your Percy and his inheritance! Ugh, ugh! (*coughing*). It is very cold. (*To MISTRESS PRUDENCE.*) Suppose you take a walk with your fair charge, Mistress Prudence; and, not to waste your time, you can pray for grace to spin me a pair of lambs'-wool stockings against Michaelmas.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Stockings, Sir Maurice! Marry, come up; *is* that a delicate allusion?

[*Walks up the stage with VIOLET.*SIR MAURICE (*to LADY ARUNDEL*).

I tell thee,—he lives; he is at hand; no longer a babe, a child, a helpless boy; but a stout man, with a ship, and a name, and a crew,—and money, for what I know. Your son Percy is a fine youth. It is a pity his father married before, and had other sons. But for your Lordships of Ashdale and Arundel, your Percy would be as poor—as poor as old Maurice Beevor. The air is very keen. Poverty is subject to ague (*shivers*), and to asthma (*wheezes*), and to cold rheums and catarrhs (*sneezes*), and to pains in the loins, lumbago, and sciatica (*rubs himself*); and when Poverty begs, the dogs bark at it; and when Poverty is ill, the doctors mangle it; and when Poverty is dying, the priests scold at it; and when Poverty is dead, nobody weeps for it. If this young man prove his case, your son, Percy Ashdale, will be very poor!

LADY ARUNDEL.

My son, my Percy! but the priest is faithful. He has sworn——

SIR MAURICE.

To keep thy secret only while thy father and thy spouse lived: they are dead. But the priest has no proofs to back his tale?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Alas! he has.

SIR MAURICE.

He has! Why did you never tell me that before?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Because—because (*aside*) I feared thy avarice more than the priest's conscience.

SIR MAURICE (*aside*).

Hum! she must come to me for aid now. I will get these proofs. Under the surface of this business I see a great many gold and silver fishes. Hum! I will begin to angle!

LADY ARUNDEL.

My own thoughts confuse me. What should be done?

SIR MAURICE.

I know a nice little farm to be sold on the other side of the river Ex; but I am very poor—a very poor old knight.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Do you trifle with me? What is your counsel?

SIR MAURICE.

There is a great deal of game on it; partridges, hares, wild geese, snipes, and plovers (*smacking his lips*); besides a magnificent preserve of sparrows, which I can always sell to the little blackguards in the streets for a penny a hundred. But I am very poor—a very poor old knight.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Within, within! You shall have gold—what you will; we must meet this danger!

SIR MAURICE.

If she had said “gold” at first, I should have saved exactly one minute and three quarters! Madam, I follow you. Never fear, I will secure the proofs.

LADY ARUNDEL.

I dreamed of him last night; a fearful dream!

[*Exit* LADY ARUNDEL *within the house*.]

MISTRESS PRUDENCE and VIOLET *advance*.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

The old miser! See how I will chafe him. (*To* SIR MAURICE, *curtsying very low*) Worshipful Sir Maurice, may I crave your blessing?

SIR MAURICE (*aside*).

I never heard of a man being asked to give his blessing who was not expected to give something else along with it. (*Aloud*) Chut, chut! what do you want with a blessing, you elderly heathen?

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Why, it does not cost anything.

SIR MAURICE (*aside*).

That's a jibe at my poverty. Every fool has a stone for the poor. (*Aloud*) Does not cost anything! Does it *bring in* anything? What will you give for it?

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

This ribbon.

SIR MAURICE (*taking the ribbon*).

Hum! it will do for a shoe-tie. There, bless you, and mend you, and incline your sinful old heart to my lambs'-wool stockings! Do you want to be blessed too, child?

VIOLET.

Nay, indeed, sir!

SIR MAURICE.

The girls grow pertier every day! That hypocritical Jezebel looks all the merrier for my benediction. I am afraid she has got a bargain out of me. [*Exit within the house.*]

Manent VIOLET—MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Now would I give my best peach-coloured padusoy to know why that malicious old miser has so mighty an influence with the Lady Arundel.

VIOLET.

You forget he is her relative; nay, failing Lord Ashdale, the heir-at-law to the estates of Arundel.—Ah, Mistress Prudence, how shall I thank thee for aiding me to baffle the unwelcome suit of this young lord?

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Dear child, I am amply repaid for it by my own conscience—(*aside*) and the young lord's mother. You sigh, sweetheart—thinking still of your absent sailor?

VIOLET.

When do I cease to think of him?—and now that my poor father is gone, more than ever. His pride might have forbid my union with one of obscure birth—but now—

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

He is indeed a cavalier of very comely presence! How noble he looked the day he leaped on board the Corsair—with his bold crew shouting round him—"England and Elizabeth—Norman to the rescue!" I think I see him now—his eyes flashing through the smoke. Ah, lady-bird, but for him we two innocent virgins would have been put up for sale in the Beauty-Market at Tunis! Why, you don't hear a word I say. Well, if you like solitude, as the young lord is abroad for the forenoon, I will leave you awhile; I have my great tapestry-work of the loves of King Solomon and Queen Sheba to finish; and when one has ceased to feel love it is a comfort at least to create it—in tent-stitch. *[Exit.]*

VIOLET.

O for some fairy talisman to conjure
Up to these longing eyes the form they pine for!
And yet in love there's no such word as absence!
The loved one, like our guardian spirit, walks
Beside us ever,—shines upon the beam—
Perfumes the flower—and sighs in every breeze!
Its presence gave such beauty to the world
That all things beautiful its likeness are;
And aught in sound most sweet, to sight most fair,
Breathes with its voice, or like its aspect smiles.

Enter NORMAN.

There spoke my fancy, not my heart!—Where art thou,
My unforgotten Norman?

NORMAN.

At thy feet!

Oh, have I lived to see thee once again?
Breathe the same air?—my own, my blessed one!
Look up—look up—these are the arms which shelter'd
When the storm howl'd around; and these the lips
Where, till this hour, the sad and holy kiss
Of parting linger'd—as the fragrance left
By angels when they touch the earth and vanish.

Look up—Night never panted for the sun
As for thine eyes, my soul!—

VIOLET.

Thrice joyous day!
My Norman!—is it thou, indeed?—my Norman!

NORMAN.

Look up, look up, my Violet—weeping? fie!
And trembling too—yet leaning on my breast.
In truth thou art too soft for such rude shelter!
Look up—I come to woo thee to the seas,
My sailor's bride—hast thou no voice but blushes?
Nay—from those roses let me, like the bee,
Drag forth the secret sweetness!—

VIOLET.

Oh, what thoughts
Were kept for speech when we once more should meet,
Now blotted from the page—and all I feel
Is—*Thou* art with me!—

NORMAN.

Not to part again.

Enter MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

What do I see?—I thought that I heard voices!
Why, Captain Norman!—It must be his ghost!

NORMAN.

Ah, my fair governante!—By this hand,
And this most chaste salute, I'm flesh and blood!

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Fie, Captain, fie! But pray be gone—The Countess—
If she should come—

NORMAN.

Oh, then I am a ghost!

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Still the same merry gentleman! But think
Of my responsibilities. What would
The Countess say, if I allowed myself
To see a stranger speaking to her ward?

NORMAN.

See, Mistress Prudence?—oh, if that be all,
What see you *now*?

[*Clapping a piece of gold to the left eye.*

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Why, nothing with the left eye—
The right has still a morbid sensibility!

NORMAN.

Poor thing!—this golden ointment soon will cure it!
[*Clapping another piece of gold to the right eye.*
What see you now, my Prudence?

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Not a soul!

NORMAN (*aside*).

Faith, 'tis a mercy on a poor man's purse
That some old ladies were not born with three eyes!
[*PRUDENCE goes up the stage.*

VIOLET.

Nay, my own Norman—nay!—You heard no step?
This awful woman—

NORMAN.

Woman! a sweet word!
Too sweet for terror, Violet!—

VIOLET.

You know not
The Dame of Arundel—her *name* has terror!
Men whisper sorcery where her dark eye falls;
Her lonely lamp outlives Night's latest star,
And o'er her beauty some dark memory glooms,
Too proud for penitence—too stern for sorrow.—
Ah! my lost father!—

NORMAN.

Violet, thou and I
Perchance are orphans *both* upon the earth:
So turn we both from earth to that great mother
(The only parent I have known), whose face
Is bright with gazing ever on the stars—

The Mother Sea;—and for our Father, Violet,
We'll look for *Him* in heaven !

[*They go up the stage.*]

Enter LADY ARUNDEL and SIR MAURICE.

[MISTRESS PRUDENCE *creeps off*.]

LADY ARUNDEL.

It must be so !—

There is no other course !

SIR MAURICE.

Without the proofs
The old man's story were but idle wind—
This rude but hunger-witted rascal shall
To Onslow's house—seize on the proofs—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Quick !—quick !—

See to it quick, good kinsman !

[*Exit* SIR MAURICE.

Re-enter NORMAN and VIOLET.

VIOLET.

It is she !

Meet her not—nay, you know not her proud temper !

NORMAN.

Pshaw for her pride !—present me boldly !—'Sdeath !
Blush you for me ?—He who's a king on deck
Is every subject's equal on the land.
I will advance !

LADY ARUNDEL (*turning suddenly*).

Avenging angels, spare me !

NORMAN.

Pardon the seeming boldness of my presence.

VIOLET.

Our gallant countryman, of whom my father
So often spoke, who from the Algerine
Rescued our lives and freedom.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ah !—your name, sir.

NORMAN.

A humble name, fair lady ;—Norman.

LADY ARUNDEL.

So!

Arm me, thou genius of all women—Craft !
Sir, you are welcome. Walk within and hold
Our home a hostel while it lists you.

NORMAN.

Madam,

'Twill be a thought for pride in distant times
To have been your guest.

LADY ARUNDEL.

He knows not what I am.

I will forfend all peril. Fair sir, follow.

[Re-enters the Castle.]

VIOLET.

Strange—Norman !

NORMAN.

What ?

VIOLET.

I never knew her yet

So courteous to a stranger.

NORMAN.

Ah, sweet lass !

I told thee right. We Princes of the Sea
Are no such despicable gallants, eh ?
O thought of joy !—one roof to shelter both,—
To see thee, hear thee, touch thy hand, and glide
By thy dear side adown the blessed time !
A most majestic lady !—her sweet face
Made my heart tremble, and call'd back old dreams
Of—Well—Has she a son ?

VIOLET.

Ah, yes !

NORMAN.

In truth

A happy man !

VIOLET.

Yet he might envy thee !

NORMAN.

Most arch reprover, yes!—as kings themselves
Might envy one whose arm entwines thee thus !

[Exeunt within the Castle.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A room in the Castle.

Enter Servant, preceding SIR MAURICE.

SERVANT (*insolently*).

You can take a seat, Sir Maurice; my Lady is engaged. She will see you when her leisure suits.

SIR MAURICE.

What a modest, respectful, civil fellow it is! you know behaviour to a man of quality, I see; if I did not fear to corrupt thy morals, by this light I would give thee a penny.

SERVANT (*half aside*).

“A man of quality!”—a beggarly poor cousin—marry, come up!
[*Exit.*]

SIR MAURICE.

Ah, there it is, a beggarly poor cousin!
Up from my cradle, a poor beggarly cousin!
Butt for my Lord—convenience for my Lady—
Jibe for the lackey. And men blame Sir Maurice
For loving gold!—My youth was drudged away
In penury and dependence—manhood went
In piling wealth that age might mount to power.
How the sleek rogues would fawn on the poor cousin,
If they could peep into his money-chest!
Let Gausson get the proofs, and half the lands
Of this proud Countess scarce shall wring them from me!
Then let the spendthrift Percy be the heir,
I’ll get the other half in mortgages,
Loans, and *post obits*. Ha, ha! who will then be
The beggarly poor cousin?

Enter LADY ARUNDEL.

I’ve despatch’d
Gausson to Onslow’s house—Well, why so pale?

LADY ARUNDEL.

He is beneath my roof—this youth, this Norman—
My guest!

SIR MAURICE.

Your guest! (*vindictively*)—The fly is in the web!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Scarce had you left, when, lo! he stood before me.
I knew him ere he spoke—his father's eyes
Look'd me to stone in his—I did not swoon,
I did not tremble!

SIR MAURICE.

Chut, chut! you dissembled
Of course—you are a woman!

LADY ARUNDEL.

What dark perils
Gather around me now!

SIR MAURICE (*whispering*).

Remove him then
While yet 'tis time.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Remove?—thy stealthy voice
Curdles my veins. Remove him?—yes, I have
A scheme to make all safe. I learn, thro' Prudence,
That he loves Violet—woo'd her months ago
In the far Indian seas. 'Twas he who saved her
When, homeward from the isle her father govern'd,
Their ship was captured by the Algerine.

SIR MAURICE (*impatiently*).

Well, well;—I see—you will befriend the suit?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ay, and promote the flight!—To some fair clime
In the New World the hurrying seas shall waft them,
And I shall sleep in peace.

SIR MAURICE.

He loves the girl!
What will thy Percy say—Hotspur the Second—
When he discovers——

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ere he learn the love,
Their bark is on the deep. I dare not tarry.
He is return'd—is with them now—a spark
Would fire his jealous humour. Be at hand,
Lest I may need thy aid.

SIR MAURICE.

Thou'rt on the abyss!

LADY ARUNDEL.

But my brain reels not, and my step is firm.

[Exit.

SIR MAURICE.

In love with Violet! I see, I see;
I'll set this fiery Percy on his rival.
If one should perish by the sword, the other
Dies by the law. Thanks to these proofs, I'll make
The rival's contest seem the assassin's snare.
Ha, ha! were these men dead, I should be heir
To Arundel and Ashdale. For the Countess—
The worm's already at her heart! Ah, shall I
Then be a miser?—Ho, there! my Lord's lackeys!—
Room for the Earl of Arundel! You dined
With the Earl yesterday? A worthy Lord!
I'll marry a young bride, get heirs, and keep
A lean poor cousin of my own to play
At leapfrog with the little Maurices.

Enter LORD ASHDALE (in disorder).

ASHDALE.

By Heavens! this stranger's insolence would fire
An anchorite's patience. 'Sdeath! his hand press'd hers,
His breathing fann'd her locks.

SIR MAURICE.

How now, my Hector,
My diamond, apple of my eye? How now?—
Chafed, vexed?

ASHDALE.

Home, home, Anatomy, and drive
The mice from thy larder.

SIR MAURICE.

Mice!—Zounds, how can I
 Keep mice?—I can't afford it—they were starved
 To death an age ago!—the last was found,
 Come Christmas three years, stretched beside a bone
 In that same larder—so consumed and worn
 By pious fast—'twas awful to behold it!
 I canonized its corpse in spirits of wine,
 And set it in the porch—a solemn warning
 To thieves and beggars. (*Aside*) Shall I be avenged—
 Shall I—for this? Come, come, my pretty Percy;
 I'll tell thee why thou strid'st about a lion:—
 Dogs would invade thy bone. This stranger loves
 Thy Violet.

ASHDALE.

Loves her!

SIR MAURICE.

And will win her too—
 Unless I help thee—for (but mum!—no word of it)
 Thy mother backs his suit.—Thou art no match,
 My innocent Percy, for a single woman;
 But two—a virgin and a widow—would
 Have made King Solomon himself a ninny.

ASHDALE.

All Egypt's plagues confound this fellow! Deaf
 Ev'n to affront.—He wards off all my taunts
 With a blunt, sailorlike, and damn'd good humour
 That makes me seem, ev'n to myself, less like
 An angry rival than a saucy clown.

SIR MAURICE.

Be cool—be cool now—take a walk with me,
 And talk upon it.

ASHDALE.

Wilt thou really serve me?

SIR MAURICE.

Ay, and for nothing too!—you patient saints
 Make miracles. Ha, ha! you like a jest
 On old Sir Maurice. All men joke upon
 The poor old cousin—ha, ha, ha!—Come, Hotspur.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Gothic hall.—On one side a huge hearth, over which a scoutcheon and old banners ; the walls hung with armour and ancient portraits.—In the front of the stage a table spread with fruits and wine.

LADY ARUNDEL—NORMAN—VIOLET.

NORMAN.

Ha, ha! in truth we made a scurvy figure
After our shipwreck.

LADY ARUNDEL.

You jest merrily
At your misfortunes!

NORMAN.

'Tis the way with sailors ;
Still in extremes. I can be sad sometimes.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Your wanderings have been long : your sight will bless
Your parents ?

NORMAN.

Ah ! I never knew that word.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Your voice has sorrow in its calm. If I
In aught could serve you, trust me !

VIOLET.

Trust her, Norman,
Methinks in the sad tale of thy young years
There's that which makes a friend, wherever Pity
Lives, in the heart of woman.

NORMAN (to LADY ARUNDEL).

Gentle lady,
The key of some charm'd music in your voice
Unlocks a long-closed chamber in my soul ;
And would you listen to an outcast's tale,

'Tis briefly told. Until my fourteenth year,
 Beneath the roof of an old village priest,
 Not far from hence, my childhood wore away.
 Then waked within me anxious thoughts and deep.
 Throughout the liberal and melodious nature
 Something seem'd absent—what I scarcely knew—
 Till one calm night, when over earth and wave
 Heaven look'd its love from all its numberless stars—
 Watchful yet breathless—suddenly the sense
 Of my sweet want swell'd in me, and I ask'd
 The priest, *why I was motherless!*

LADY ARUNDEL.

And he ?

NORMAN.

Wept as he answered, “ I was nobly born ! ”

LADY ARUNDEL (*aside*).

The traitor !

NORMAN.

And that time would bring the hour,
 As yet denied, when from a dismal past
 Would dawn a luminous future. As he spake,
 There gleam'd across my soul a dim remembrance
 Of a pale face in infancy beheld—
 A shadowy face, but from whose lips there breathed
 The words that none but mothers murmur !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh,

My heart, be still !

NORMAN.

'Twas at that time there came
 Into our hamlet a rude, jovial seaman,
 With the frank mien boys welcome, and wild tales
 Of the far Indian lands, from which mine ear
 Drank envious wonder. Brief—his legends fired me.
 And 'rom the deep, whose billows wash'd the shore
 On which our casements look'd, I heard a voice
 That woo'd me to its bosom : Raleigh's fame,
 The New World's marvels, then made old men heroes,
 ynd young men dreamers ! So I left my home
 With that wild seaman.

LADY ARUNDEL.

‘ Ere you left, the priest
Said naught to make less dark your lineage ?

NORMAN.

No ;
Nor did he chide my ardour. “ Go,” he said ;
“ Win for thyself a name that pride may envy,
And pride, which is thy foe, will own thee yet !”

LADY ARUNDEL.

I breathe more freely !

NORMAN.

Can you heed thus gently
The stranger’s tale ? Your colour comes and goes.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Your story moves me much : pray you, resume.

NORMAN.

The villain w hom I trusted, when we reached
The bark he ruled, cast me to chains and darkness,
And so to sea. At length, no land in sight,
His crew, dark swarthy men—the refuse crimes
Of many lands—for he, it seems, a pirate—
Call’d me on deck—struck off my fetters : “ Boy,”
He said, and grimly smiled, “ not mine the wrong :
Thy chains are forged from gold, the gold of those
Who gave thee birth !”

LADY ARUNDEL.

A lie ! a hideous lie !

Be sure a lie !

NORMAN.

I answer’d so, and wrench’d
From his own hand the blade it bore, and struck
The slanderer to my feet. With that a shout,
A hundred knives gleam’d round me ; but the pirate,
Wiping the gore from his gash’d brow, cried, “ Hold ;
Such death were mercy.”—Then they grip’d and bound me
To a slight plank ; spread to the wind their sails ;
And left me on the waves alone with God !

VIOLET (*taking his hand*).

My heart melts in my eyes :—and He preserved thee !

NORMAN.

That day, and all that night, upon the seas
Toss'd the frail barrier between life and death.
Heaven lull'd the gales; and, when the stars came forth,
All look'd so bland and gentle that I wept,
Recall'd that wretch's words, and murmur'd, "Wave
And wind are kinder than a parent." Lady,
Dost *thou* weep also?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Do I? Nay, go on!

NORMAN.

Day dawn'd, and, glittering in the sun, behold
A sail—a flag!

VIOLET.

Well, well.

NORMAN.

It pass'd away,
And saw me not. Noon, and then thirst and famine;
And, with parch'd lips, I call'd on death, and sought
To wrench my limbs from the stiff cords that gnaw'd
Into the flesh, and drop into the deep;
And then methought I saw, beneath the clear
And crystal lymph, a dark, swift-moving thing,
With watchful glassy eyes,—the ocean-monster
That follows ships for prey. Then life once more
Grew sweet, and with a strain'd and horrent gaze,
And lifted hair, I floated on, till sense
Grew dim and dimlier, and a terrible sleep—
In which still—still—those livid eyes met mine—
Fell on me, and——

VIOLET.

Go on!

NORMAN.

I woke, and heard
My native tongue. Kind looks were bent upon me:
I lay on deck—escaped the ghastly death;
For God had watch'd the sleeper!

VIOLET (*half aside*).

My own Norman!

NORMAN.

'Twas a brave seaman, who with Raleigh served,
 That own'd the ship. Beneath his fostering eyes
 I fought and labour'd upward. At his death—
 [A death, may such be mine!—a hero's death!—
 The blue flag waving o'er the victory won!]
 He left me the sole heir to all his wealth,—
 Some sacks of pistoles—his good frigate—and
 His honest name! (*To VIOLET.*) Fair maid, the happiest deed
 That decks my life *thou* knowest!

LADY ARUNDEL.

And the priest :
 Hast thou not seen him since ye parted ?

NORMAN.

No ;
 But two short days return'd to these dear shores.
 (*Aside to VIOLET.*) Those eyes the guiding stars by which I
 steer'd.

[*VIOLET and NORMAN converse apart.*]LADY ARUNDEL (*gazing on them*).

He loves—yes, *there* my hope ! Ha ! Percy's voice !
 I must beguile or blind *him*. One day more,
 And all is safe. Fair Sir, anon I join you. [*Exit.*]

VIOLET.

And thou hast loved me thus ?

NORMAN.

Thus, Violet ; nay,—
 For when had true love words for *all* its secrets ?
 In some sweet night, becalm'd upon the deep,
 The blue air breathless in the starry peace,
 After long silence, hush'd as heaven, but fill'd
 With happy thoughts as heaven with angels, thou
 Shalt lift thine eyes to mine, and with a glance
 Learn how the lonely love !

VIOLET.

Not lonely, Norman :
Not lonely, henceforth : *I* shall be with thee !
 Where'er thou goest, my soul is ; and thy love

Has grown life's life. To see thee, hear thee, dream
 Of thee when absent—to bear all—brave all—
 By thy dear side;—*this* has become my nature—
 Thy shadow, deepening as thy day declines,
 And dying when thou settest.

NORMAN.

Heaven desert me
 If by one cold look I should ever chill
 The woman heart within thee!

VIOLET.

So, my Norman,
 In cloud, or sunshine—labour as repose—
 Meek tho' I be, and lowly,—thou shalt find
This courage of my sex, that bears all change
 Save change in thee—and never breathes one murmur,
 Unless it be a prayer to guard my Norman!

NORMAN.

My bride—my blessing—my adored!

Enter ASHDALE.

ASHDALE.

Gramercy!

I well escaped to meet my lady mother!
 This tale of the old knight has fired my blood.
 I would not see her in this mood—

(turning and perceiving VIOLET and NORMAN.)

By heavens!

Whispering!—so close!—

(approaching) Familiar sir—excuse me:

I do not see the golden spurs of knighthood—

NORMAN *(aside)*.

These landmen, who would shake if the wind blew,
 Are mighty quarrelsome. The golden spurs!
 He thinks we ride on horseback thro' the seas!
 Alas! we sailors have not so much gold
 That we should waste it on our heels.

ASHDALE.

D'ye jest, sir?

VIOLET.

Oh cousin, fie!

ASHDALE (*mimicking her*).

Oh cousin, fie!—sir, mark me:
There's one too many present—

NORMAN (*aside*).

On my life
I think with him!—he might remove the objection!—

ASHDALE.

Good Master Norman, in the seneschal's hall
You'll find your equals.

NORMAN.

Haughty lord, not so.
He who calls me his equal first must prove
His arm as strong—his blade as keen—his heart
As calm in peril!—tush! put up thy sword.
He *not* my equal who insults his guest,
And seeks his safety in the eyes of woman.

Enter LADY ARUNDEL.

VIOLET.

Protect your guest from your rash son!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Lord Ashdale—
These humours wrong your birth. To you, sir stranger,
Have I in aught so fail'd that in the son
You should rebuke the mother?

NORMAN.

Ask your son
If I was prompt to answer scorn by strife.

ASHDALE.

Nay, it is true, more prompt in taking licence
Than courting chastisement!

NORMAN.

You hear him, lady.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ashdale, be ruled—my best beloved—my child,
Forbear—you—

ASHDALE (*quickly*).

Learn'd in childhood from my mother
To brook no rival, and to fear no foe!
I am too old to alter now. Observe me:
You thwart my suit to Violet—you defend
This insolent stranger. Mother, take my counsel:
Despatch him hence and straight, or, by mine honour,
Blood will be shed.—Beware!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Blood! blood! whose blood?

ASHDALE.

Not mine—for noble knighthood is too holy
For varlet weapons!—not your son's—

LADY ARUNDEL.

My son's!

ASHDALE.

Look to it, mother!—We may meet again, sir.
Fie, mother! pale?—Beshrew me, but those eyes
Look fondly on the knave!

[*Exit.*

LADY ARUNDEL.

O, sharper than
The serpent's tooth!—

NORMAN.

Sweet hostess, do not fear me;
There is a something in your looks that melts
The manhood in me back to second childhood.
Let him rail on—he is your son, and safe
From the poor stranger's sword.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Go, Violet,—
No, stay—come back—I know thy secret, girl—
Thou lovest this Norman?

VIOLET.

Lady—I—he saved
My life and honour—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Joy!—oh, joy! retire

And trust in me—

[*Exit* VIOLET.]

LADY ARUNDEL.

Now, sir—(*aside*) Alas! alas!

How like to his dead father!

NORMAN.

Speak—command,

And learn how thou canst move me!

LADY ARUNDEL.

I'm a mother!

I live but for this boy—heart, life, and soul,

Are interweaved with his!

NORMAN.

How sweet to hear

How mothers love their sons!

LADY ARUNDEL.

He is proud and fiery,

Quick to affront, slow to forgive. Nay, more:

Ashdale hath set his heart where thine is placed;

The air both breathe seems blood-red to my eyes.

Fly with her!—fly, this night!

NORMAN.

This night, with her?

Rapture! With Violet?

LADY ARUNDEL.

You consent?

NORMAN.

And yet

My birth untrack'd—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh, lose not for a doubt

Your certain bliss;—and, heed me—I have wealth

To sharpen law, and power to ripen justice;—

I will explore the mazes of this mystery—

I—I will track your parents!

NORMAN.

Blessed lady!

What have I done, that thou shouldst care for Norman?

My parents!—find me one with eyes like thine,

And, were she lowliest of the hamlet born,

I would not change with monarchs.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Mighty Nature!

Why speak'st thou thus to him, yet dumb to me?

What is there in these haggard looks to charm thee,

Young stranger?

NORMAN.

Madam, when I gaze upon thee,

Methinks an angel's hand lifts up the veil

Of Time—the Great Magician; and I see

A face like thine bent o'er my infant couch,

And—pardon me—it is a vain, wild thought—

I know it is—but on my faith, I think

My mother was like thee!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Like me! ha, ha!

Most foolish thought. (*Aside*) I shall go mad with terror

If here he linger longer. Well, your ship

Is nigh at hand; you can embark to-night.

NORMAN.

So soon—so soon all mine!—In distant years,

Tho' *we* may meet no more—when thou, fair dame,

Hast lost ev'n memory of the stranger—o'er

The lonely deep, morning and night, shall rise

His prayer for thee.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Thou, thou!—a prayer for me?

Will Heaven record it? Nature rushes on me—

I cannot—I—forgive me; ere you part

We meet again, and—

[*Rushes out.*]

NORMAN.

When I spoke of prayer

Her lip grew white. What is there in this woman

That half divides my thoughts with Violet's love?
Strange, while I muse, a chill and solemn awe
Creeps to my heart. Away, ye ill-timed omens!
Violet, at thy dear name the phantoms vanish,
And the glad Future breaks, a Fairy Isle,—
Thy voice its music, and thy smile its heaven!

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Gardens of the Castle—a different part from that in Act I.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Who would have thought the proud Countess would have been so pleased with the love of this wild Captain for my young lady? I think he must have given her some of the golden ointment too! But anything to thwart the suit of the young Lord. She expects him to marry no one less than a princess, I suppose.

Enter SIR MAURICE.

SIR MAURICE.

Ugh! ugh! Have you seen Lord Ashdale pass this way?

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

No, your Worship!

SIR MAURICE (*caressingly*).

So this sea-Captain is making love to your pretty charge, Mistress Prudence! I suppose, between you and me, there will be a marriage in the family.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

I am sure, Sir Maurice, I shall not say you nay.

SIR MAURICE.

Say me nay? I never offered thee anything.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

I thought you said "between you and me there was to be a marriage in the family." We might do a sillier thing, Sir Maurice. Better marry than do worse.

SIR MAURICE.

Worse!—Go and do your worst. I defy your seductions, you

antiquated Dalilah. Hence; and if you chance on Lord Ashdale, say I would see him.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

If you should be serious, Sir Maurice, in your proposal—

SIR MAURICE.

Pish!—am I to be *your* jibe too?—[*Exit* MRS. PRUDENCE, *laughing.*] Every new slight I receive in this household I treasure up *here—here!*

Enter GAUSSEN.

Ha—so soon returned! hast thou seen the priest?—hast thou got the proofs?—hast thou—

GAUSSEN.

The priest left his house this morning an hour ere I arrived, in company with a stranger, who, from what I could learn, is a seaman: but the description does not suit the one we look after.

SIR MAURICE.

I see the lands of Arundel dropping from my gripe—but, no—no! if I miss the proofs, I will secure the claimant. Giles GausSEN, this day five-and-twenty years ago, didst thou not commit a crime that, if told, would bring thee to the scaffold?—Go to!—unless this Norman die, the hemp is spun that will fit thee with a halter.

GAUSSEN.

I would I had the boy once more in my clutches. Think you I have forgiven him for this gash? Till then, the wenches (curse them!) did not mock at me—and—no matter! But what is he to the dead man? Thou told'st me it was his parents who paid me the gold to rid them of him.

SIR MAURICE.

Why, hark, I will tell thee—hush! what's that?—get aside—it is he himself—quick!—

[*They hide amidst the trees.*]

Enter NORMAN and VIOLET.

VIOLET.

What, Norman, she consents?

NORMAN.

Yes, tremble not,

My best beloved.

VIOLET.

I tremble lest hereafter
Thou deem'st me over bold.

NORMAN.

Not bold, but trustful,
As love is ever!—Nay, be soothed, and think
Of the bright lands within the western main
Where we will build our home, what time the seas
Weary thy gaze;—there the broad palm-tree shades
The soft and delicate light of skies as fair
As those that slept on Eden;—Nature, there,
Like a gay spendthrift in his flush of youth,
Flings her whole treasure in the lap of Time.—
On turfs by fairies trod, the eternal Flora
Spreads all her blooms; and from a lake-like sea
Wooes to her odorous haunts the western wind!
While, circling round and upward from the boughs,
Golden with fruits that lure the joyous birds,
Melody, like a happy soul released,
Hangs in the air, and from invisible plumes
Shakes sweetness down!—

Enter LADY ARUNDEL.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ye have fix'd the hour and place
For flight—this night?

NORMAN.

Why, Lady, no; as yet
The blush upon her cheek at *thought* of flight
Lingers like dawn in heaven,—but like the dawn
The blush foretells the smile the heaven shall wear!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Trifle not—Ashdale is no dull-eyed rival;—
If he suspect—

NORMAN (*fiercely*).

What then?

LADY ARUNDEL.

So hot! forget you
Your word to waive all contest?—No—that glance

Does answer "No."—And now, fair sir—this letter
To the Venetian goldsmith, Paolo Trezzi,
Yields you this lady's dower; for from these halls
Never went bride without her portion.

NORMAN.

Lady,

Ye who have dwelt upon the sordid land,
Amidst the everlasting gloomy war
Of Poverty with Wealth—ye cannot know
How we, the wild sons of the Ocean, mock
At men who fret out life with care for gold.
O! the fierce sickness of the soul—to see
Love bought and sold—and all the heaven-roof'd temple
Of God's great globe, the money-change of Mammon!
I dream of love, enduring faith, a heart
Mingled with mine—a deathless heritage
Which I can take unsullied to the stars,
When the Great Father calls his children home;—
And in the midst of this Elysian dream,
Lo, Gold—the demon Gold!—alas! the creeds
Of the false land!

LADY ARUNDEL.

And once I thought like him!
Ah! happy Violet!—(*more coldly*) well—of this hereafter.
What hour can boat and boatmen wait your orders?

NORMAN.

The favouring moon breaks one hour ere the midnight.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Meet where the Castle chase, by the last gate,
Slopes to the ocean-beach—

NORMAN.

Ay—as I took
That path this morn, I saw the scathed ruins
Of an old chapel on the spot you name;—
Meet me there, Violet—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ha—within that chapel!

NORMAN.

Is it not holy ground?

LADY ARUNDEL (*impatiently*).

Well, well—begone,
And meet one hour ere midnight—

VIOLET.

Let us wait

And hope, dear Norman—

LADY ARUNDEL.

“Hope,” girl! he must quit
These halls this day—would you his blood?—

VIOLET.

The love

I bear thee steals so little from the earth,
I cannot think it err because its faith
Will not nurse fear;—to-night, then—but, alas!
See the sky lowers—the nights are dark—

NORMAN.

Nay, then,

Streams o’er our path the Planet Saint of lovers:
And mark this white plume with the sparkling gem,
Pluck’d from the turban of the Algerine
That happy day—so thou shalt see the token
Gleam thro’ the shadows.

VIOLET.

Yet—

NORMAN.

On board my bark
We boast a reverend priest—who shall attend
To consecrate our vows!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Come! to your chamber
I’ll with thee and allay all fear; hark! steps!
Go, sir—let Ashdale find thee not!—remember
Thy word; and so farewell and prosper.

NORMAN.

Ah!

Shall *we* not meet again?—God's blessing on thee!
Wilt *thou* not bless me too?

(*Kissing her hand.*)

LADY ARUNDEL.

I!—Heaven will bless thee.

(*Pressing his hand convulsively.*)

[*Exeunt* LADY ARUNDEL and VIOLET.]

NORMAN.

Now could I linger here whole hours; and dream—
Of what?—well, Falkner has return'd ere this.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

A cavalier, arrived in haste, demands
An audience, sir.

NORMAN.

Of me?

SERVANT.

Upon the instant.

He bade me name him "Falkner."

NORMAN.

Falkner! Ever

Ready in need—admit him: sure true Friendship
Is a magician—and foretels our wishes.

Enter FALKNER.

Welcome, thrice welcome. Listen to me—bid
Our boat attend me on the beach below,
Close by a ruin'd chapel—where the sea
Washes the forest's farthest verge—one hour.
Before night's last: our chaplain too is needed.
See to it—quick!—away!

FALKNER.

Piano, friend—

As the Italians phrase it—slow and sure.
I've famous news;—the priest I sought and found,
And left him near these halls. He has the proofs
(And will reveal them) of thy birth—thy name.
Well; art thou dumb?

NORMAN.

O Heavens ! for this one day
Thou mak'st life bankrupt in its blessings !—He ?
Onslow—art sure ?—

FAKNER.

Some men may know their names,
Tho' *you* do not. He *told* me *his* was Onslow.

NORMAN.

Where shall I seek him ?

FAKNER.

By the very chapel
Thou spok'st of !—

NORMAN.

Is this destiny ?

FAKNER.

And wouldst thou
Have me still see thine orders—

NORMAN.

To the letter.
The boat—the chaplain—send to the ship and bid it
Veer round—in sight of the beach—before the hour.

FAKNER.

Explain—

NORMAN.

No time for words, dear Falkner—go !

[*Exit Falkner.*]

Enter MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Sir Maurice !—Where's Sir Maurice ?—Have you seen
Sir Maurice here ?

NORMAN.

A fico for Sir Maurice !
Ah ! Mistress Prudence, when we meet again,
Poor Captain Norman may be Captain Cræsus !
Oh, Violet ! birth and wealth were sweet indeed,
If they could make me worthier to possess thee. [*Exit.*
[SIR MAURICE comes forth.]

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

Where have you hid yourself, sir?

SIR MAURICE.

Hid myself!

Am I a man to hide myself?

MISTRESS PRUDENCE.

The Countess

Requires your presence on the instant; I

Said you were—Ah, she comes.

[*Exit.*

SIR MAURICE (*to GAUSSEN, who is stealing out*).

Keep close—keep close!

Enter LADY ARUNDEL.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Dost thou not dread to look upon me?—What!

I gave thee gold—gold to thy heart's content—

To waft young Arthur to a distant land;

Gold for his future lot—not bribes for murder!

Sold to the pirate!—cast on the wild seas!

O traitor!—traitor!

SIR MAURICE.

I knew naught of this.

Hush!—hush!—Speak low! He I employed the traitor,

Not your poor trusty knight;—but mark me, cousin;

Not then your danger half so dark as now.

Time flies the while I speak.—Thou scarce wert gone

When came a stranger with such news!—Old Onslow

At hand—he has the proofs!—I—I can save thee,

And I alone!—Who is the traitor now?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Terror on terror crowds upon me, like

Waters above a drowning wretch!

SIR MAURICE.

Be quick!

And, hark! I must bribe high!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Get me the proofs,

Silence the priest, and whatsoe'er thou ask'st
Is thine.

SIR MAURICE.

The farms and manor-house of Bothleigh—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Thine—thine!

SIR MAURICE.

Agreed!—now go in peace and safety—
Leave me to work.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh, Percy! for thy sake—
For thy sake this—not mine—bear witness, Heaven!
I will go pray.

[*Exit.*]

SIR MAURICE.

Ay, pray! when weak bad women
Gorge some huge crime, they always after it
Nibble a bit of prayer, just to digest it!
So gluttons cram a hecatomb of meat,
And then correct it with a crumb of cheese.
Come from thy lair, my jackal of the sea.

[*GAUSSEN comes forth.*]

Fly to the chapel. Ah, thou know'st those ruins!—
Swoop on the grey-hair'd man thou findest there:
Seize, and conceal, and gag him in some cave.
Tear from him all—papers and parchments—all!
Bring them to me—a thousand bright broad pieces.—
The seaman took the longer path;—this way—
You see the track, it halves the distance.

GAUSSEN.

If

He struggle, must I—

SIR MAURICE.

Prate thou not of struggles;
I give thee orders but to seize the papers.
Fail, and thou know'st I have thy secret!—Win,
And thou art rich for life—away!

[*Exit GAUSSEN.*]

At worst

I am a thousand pounds a-year the warmer:

At best—why, that's to come. I know a tame,
Patient, poor cousin—Gods, how I will plague him!

As he goes out enter LORD ASHDALE.

Hadst thou come sooner, thou hadst spoil'd a love-scene.

ASHDALE.

Wert thou its witness, then?

SIR MAURICE.

Ay, in the corner,
Like peeping Tom. You've been at Coventry?

ASHDALE.

Jest not—thou madden'st me.

SIR MAURICE.

Thou'lt swear to keep
Our counsel from thy mother?

ASHDALE.

By my honour.

SIR MAURICE.

They fly this night—they meet one hour ere midnight
By the old chapel. Boat and priest await—
She'll know him by the jewel in his plume :
Put one in thine—I'll sell thee one a bargain.

ASHDALE.

This night! the chapel! Oh, by earth and heaven,
I will not lose this girl! I thank thee, Knight.

[*Exit.*

SIR MAURICE.

Both flies are in the web! I know a spider
Who shall *eat* both. When shall I wake an earl?

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

In the background a Gothic chapel partially in ruins ;—through a broken arch the sea seen at a little distance. In front, broken forest-ground, a small brook running to the sea. At the side, a small tower that admits to the demesnes of the Castle. Sunset.

ONSLow (*in front of the chapel*).

More than ten years have pass'd since I beheld him—
The noble boy ;—now time annuls my oath,
And cancels all his wrongs ! Ye dismal wrecks—
Well might the lightning scathe your bloodstain'd walls,
To death and marriage consecrate alike,
As is the tale that trembles on my lips !
Lo, the toad battenings where the altar stood,
But ruin spares the tomb ! So thro' the earth
How many altars vow'd to human love
A single tomb outlasts !

Enter GAUSSEN from the tower.

GAUSSEN.

What, in time ?

Alone, too ?

[*Rushing upon ONSLOW.*

Speak not, stir not, or thou diest !
The scrolls—the papers that thou bear'st about thee !

ONSLow.

Avaunt, I know thee, murderer ! On this spot
The dead rise up against thee.

GAUSSEN.

Dost thou know me ?
Then know thy doom and doomsman !

ONSLow.

Villain ! off !

[*Breaks from him and passes through the arches of the chapel.*

GAUSSEN (*following*).

Thy blood on thine own head !

Enter NORMAN.

NORMAN.

A human cry !

Ha ! ruffian,—hold !

[Rushes through the arches.

Re-enter GAUSSEN disarmed.

GAUSSEN.

Disarm'd ! my hand is palsied !

[NORMAN appears as in pursuit—GAUSSEN, creeping along the ruins, enters the tower unperceived.

NORMAN.

Is it a fiend, that earth should swallow ?

ONSLow (*within, groaning*).

Oh !

[NORMAN re-enters the Chapel.

GAUSSEN (*from the tower*).

We meet again !—

Enter NORMAN, bearing ONSLOW, wounded.

ONSLow.

Ah ! life is fading fast !—

Let me look on thee—once more I behold thee,
And can depart in peace !—

NORMAN.

Hush—do not speak !—

ONSLow.

Nay, words grow few. I bade thee meet me here;
Yonder where Murder found me—on this day
Twenty and five years back—thy father—

NORMAN.

Father !

Say on ! my father ?

ONSLow.

Died, most foully murder'd.

NORMAN.

Blood—blood for blood—the murderer—name him !

ONSLow.

Listen.—

There was a page, fair, gentle, brave, but lowborn;—
The daughter of the lordly House he served
Saw him and loved :—they wed in stealth;—these hands
Join'd them together in yon holy walls;
They met in secret. I—I—my voice fails me!

[NORMAN goes to the brook, brings water in the hollow
of his hand, and sprinkles the face of the old man.]

ONSLow.

The father learn'd the love—not wedlock—deem'd
His child dishonour'd.—On this spot the lovers
Met, with design to fly. I loved the youth—
His foster-sire—I was to share their flight.

NORMAN.

Speak on—speak on.

ONSLow.

'Twas night—a fearful night—
Lightning and storm!—They met—and murderous hands
Seized on thy father—dragg'd him from her breast!—
Oh!—that wild shriek—I hear it still!—he died
By the same wretch that is my murderer now.

NORMAN.

Thy murderer now? O thanks, revealing Heaven!
One death, one deed—one arm avenges both!

ONSLow.

Died in these arms—three flagstones from the altar—
Near the lone tomb where the first Baron sleeps;—
Still mark the gore-stains where his bones are buried.

NORMAN.

Oh!—horror—horror!

ONSLow.

Three nights thence thy mother
Gave birth to thee;—a kinsman, whose cold heart
Promise of gold had soften'd to her grief,
Bore to my home the babe!

NORMAN.

And she, my mother?

Does she live still?—my mother?

ON SLOW.

She survived—

Forced to a lordlier husband's arms. The tale
Of the sad past unknown!

NORMAN.

It *was* her face

Mine infant eyes beheld?—

ON SLOW.

In stealth a wife;

In stealth a mother—yes!—But with new ties
Came new affections.—To the second nuptials
A second son was born.—She loved him well;
Better than thee—than her own soul.

NORMAN.

Poor mother!—

ON SLOW.

But few words more.—I—I—Oh—

NORMAN.

Breathe less loud,

My soul is in my ears.

ON SLOW.

Too moved by pity—

Too sway'd by fear—lest they should rend thee from me,
I took a solemn oath to veil the secret—
Conceal thy rights—while lived her sire, and he,
Her second lord; and thus allow'd thy youth
To quit my roof:—they died,—the sire and husband,—
Some two years since;—thou still afar. I sought
Thy mother, and her heart was marble;—Oh!
Here—here (*gives papers*). Go, seek thy shelter in the law;
But shun yon towers!—thy mother—

NORMAN.

But one word!

My mother's name!—

ON SLOW (*pointing to papers*).

There!

[*Raises himself to his feet with a sudden effort.*]

Hear my last words, Heaven!
 Protect the wrong'd!—upon this head I lay
 An old man's blessing—Now, farewell! [Dies.

NORMAN.

Stay—stay

Thy flight, thou gentlest spirit! Dumb! He breathes not!
 Dead—dead—my second sire! O hell-born deed!
 Could not these white hairs plead for thee?

—Revenge!

Earth give no shelter to the man of blood!
 Conduct his feet, Ordainer of all doom,
 To retributive slaughter; and vouchsafe
 This arm thine instrument! Mine eyes deceived me,
 Or the red beam, streaking the vaulted gloom,
 Show'd me the face of—Well! the Heavens are just,
 AND WE SHALL MEET AGAIN!—Farewell, farewell!
 Heaven gains a saint in thee!—My mother lives!
 What tho' she has another child to love?
 Is not a mother's heart a mighty space,
 Embracing all her children? Of that realm
 How little will content me!—She will fold
 Her arms around me, and from out her breast
 The eyes that look to hers shall melt away
 With passionate tears the past and all its sorrows!

[Opening the papers.]

What—what! her son—her son! Mysterious Nature,
 At the first glance I loved her! Wealth, lands, titles,
 A name that glitters, like a star, amidst
 The galaxy of England's loftiest born!
 O Violet—O my bride—and O my mother!
 Out from my heart henceforth each low desire,
 Each meaner hope my wilder youth conceived!
 Be my soul instinct with such glorious thoughts
 As, springing to great deeds, shall leave my land
 A bright heroic lesson of the things
 In which true nobleness endures for ever!
 And while I told my woes she wept, she did!
 'Tis her sweet writing! bless her! See, she calls me
 Arthur, and child, and child, her precious one,
 Her hope, her darling! Mother—my own mother!

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The hall in the Castle of Arundel.—Night—lights.

SIR MAURICE—GAUSSEN.

SIR MAURICE.

Thou hast not got the papers; and thou hast committed a murder; and, what is worse, thou hast slain the wrong man!

GAUSSEN.

But——

SIR MAURICE.

But me no buts: thou hast ruined me. Stand back, and let me think. (*Aside.*) The heir has the proofs—clear! He will not come back to this house, the very den of his unnatural foe—clear! He will seek the law for redress—clear, clear! But he loves Violet. He will keep his assignation; carry away the girl; and then off to London, to assert his rights:—all this is clear as noon-day! GausSEN, thou canst repair all. The sea-captain will be at the ruins to-night—eleven of the clock—to be married in the chapel by stealth.

GAUSSEN.

I overheard all that in the gardens (*aside*—and more too perhaps), and am already prepared. My bold fellows shall seize priest and boatmen, and I will await the bridegroom.

SIR MAURICE.

And that thy cutlass may not fail thee this time, I will brace thy hand by refreshing thy memory. Five-and-twenty years ago—thou then but a young fellow, caught in thy first desperate piracy on the high seas—wert placed in the dungeons of this castle, in order to be marched off the next day to the county gaol, with a rope for thy journey's end. Thou wert released that night: at day-break thou wert on the merry waves again, with a sack of pistoles in thy pouch. What was the price of thy life and liberty?

GAUSSEN.

The blood of a man whom the stern old Lord bade me strike as his worst foe.

SIR MAURICE.

Right! and the son of that man is the boy thou didst cast on the seas! Thou sayest that Onslow recognised thee. Be sure the dying man told the son in what face to look for his father's murderer. If thou make not sure work to-night, thou art meat for the crows!

GAUSSEN.

Trust me. I will fasten to him as a panther on the stag!

SIR MAURICE.

And—stand back!—let me think!—let me think! I see it!—I see! Thou shalt not only do the deed, but thou shalt find another to bear the blame. This crackbrain, Ashdale, the young Lord, will be on the spot. He loves the girl Norman would wed: they will have words, perhaps blows. Be on the watch with thy fellows—ten, twenty of them: rush in, under pretence of separating—stab—stab both! Dead men tell no tales: and ye and your men can bear witness that they fell by each other's hands!

GAUSSEN.

'Tis a death more than I bargained for. The price?

SIR MAURICE.

Shall be doubled—two thousand pieces!

GAUSSEN.

Touch hands. Bring five hundred to-night by the old chapel—for my men. I will come for the rest to thine own house to morrow-eve at dusk.

SIR MAURICE.

Five hundred to-night! Five hundred, Bully GausSEN, beforehand! Premiums are an abomination in law—usury, rank usury!

GAUSSEN.

I must have them; my men want pay, and are half mutinous as it is. Blood and wounds, old knight! this is sharp work you

set them at—to net a covey of sailors, who will fight like devils, and to stab a lord—to say nothing of the other man—that's my quarrel—five hundred pieces, or I hoist sail, and you may catch the sailors and stab the Lord for yourself.

SIR MAURICE (*groaning*).

Five hundred little, pretty, smiling, golden-faced cherubim: 'tis a second massacre of the Innocents! Well, thou shalt have them (*aside*—and the Countess must repay me). Before eleven I will be with thee: but you will smite both—both the Lord and the Captain: no time for death-bed explanations.

GAUSSEN.

They shall never hear the bell toll midnight.

[*Exit.*

SIR MAURICE.

Then, ere matins, I shall be Baron Ashdale and heir of Arundel. The lordship and lands of Ashdale are so settled that they go at once to the male heir. Yes, I can trust this man to do the deed! but can I trust him after it? A pretty acquaintance Giles Gausсен for a great lord!—Well, time enough to be rid of him.

ASHDALE (*speaking without*).

Yes—the dun and sorrell.

Enter LORD ASHDALE.

SIR MAURICE.

Hast thou prepared thy plans, my Hotspur?—

ASHDALE.

Yes;

My steeds and grooms will wait me in the forest:
And, for the rest, — I wear my father's sword.

SIR MAURICE.

Oh, I could hug thee! By my golden spurs,
I doat on valour!—Thou wilt win the maid,
I know thou wilt.—Faith, how a frown becomes thee!
Yet he's no carpet warrior—thou must use
All thy address!—

ASHDALE.

Thou need'st not urge me to it.

SIR MAURICE.

Good night, and luck to thee. (*Aside.*) Now, now I have him!
I feel myself a lord already!—lights there!

Enter Servant.

Light me, good knave; there is a pistole for thee.

(*Aside*) A great man should be generous.—'Bye, my
Hector (*hums a tune*).

Is my state-coach below?—Oh, I forgot.

[*Exit.*

LORD ASHDALE (*looking after him in great surprise*).

Touch'd, crazed!—the old knight has so starved his body,
The brains have taken fright, and given him warning.

Ha, ha! adventure is the gale to love;

And stratagem the salt of its tide! ha, ha!

I think I never loved this maid so well

As now, 'twixt fear of loss and hope of triumph.

Enter LADY ARUNDEL.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Percy—

ASHDALE.

Well, madam, I am press'd—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh, Percy!

Speak kindly, Percy!

ASHDALE.

Mother, if my mood
Be chafed to-day, forgive it!—shall I speak?
Your sudden care for this ignoble stranger,
Coupled with memory of wild words your lips
Oftimes let fall—your penances and fasts—
Your midnight vigils—your habitual gloom;—
Weaving all this, to form a likelihood,
Why, harsher judgment than your son's, my mother,
Might half suspect—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Speak on, sir—

ASHDALE.

That your past

Was darken'd by some unatoned-for sin,
Whose veil this stranger's hand had lifted.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Percy,

Your words are daggers—if the unstrung brain
At times gives discord—if the insane phantoms
That haunt all hearts vex'd by the storms of life—
(And *I* have suffer'd, Percy, sadly suffer'd)—
Do mock and gibber in my dreary path—
'Tis thine to pity, to forbear, to soothe,
Never to doubt. Where should that angel men
Call "CHARITY" abide—but in the hearts
Of our own children?

ASHDALE.

Mother—oh, forgive me!

If the unquiet, cavilling spirit born
Within me, of the race that, like the ermine,
Would pine to death when sullied by one stain,
Makes me seem harsh—forgive me!

LADY ARUNDEL (*approaching him*).

Never know

Till I am dead how deeply I have loved thee!
Thy father—tho' an earl in rank—and near
To the royal house in blood and martial fame—
Had wed before—had other sons—on *me*
Alone depends thy heritage—from me
Thy lordship and thy fortunes.

ASHDALE.

True, what then?

LADY ARUNDEL.

You have loved pomp and state; and I have pinch'd
To feed the lavish wants of your wild youth—
Have I not, Percy?

ASHDALE.

You have been to me
Ever most bounteous, mother.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Yet, in truth,

You prize too much the outward show of things.
 Could you not bear—for you have youth and health,
 Beauty and strength—the golden wealth of Nature :—
 Could you not bear descent from that vain height
 Of fortune, where poor Vanity builds towers
 The heart inhabits not—to live less proud—
 To feast less gorgeously—to curb thy wants
 Within the state—not of the heir to earls,
 But of a simple gentleman, whose station
 Lies in his worth and valour ?—Could you ?

ASHDALE.

Never !

Such as I am, my sire and you have made me,—
 Ambitious, haughty, prodigal!—my hopes
 A part of my very life ! If I could fall
 From my high state, it were as Romans fell—
 On their sword's point. Why is your cheek so hueless ?
 Why daunt yourself with air-drawn phantasies ?
 Who can deprive me of mine heritage ?
 The titles of the antique seignory—
 That will be mine, in trust for sons unborn,
 When time (from this day may the date be far !)
 Transfers the ancestral coronal that gems
 Thy stately brows to no unworthy heir ?

LADY ARUNDEL (*aside*).

My proud soul speaks in his, my lion boy !
 Come shame—come crime—come death and doom hereafter—
 I'll know no son but him !

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

Most honour'd madam,
 The cavalier you entertained this morning
 Is here.

LADY ARUNDEL.

I will not see him !

Enter NORMAN.

NORMAN.

Gracious lady !

My business—grant me but your private ear—
Will plead for my intrusion.

LADY ARUNDEL (*aside*).

All else fails!
My own stern heart support me!

NORMAN (*aside*).

How like strangers
They look upon me, both, the while I yearn
To rush into their arms!

ASHDALE.

Why parley with him?
Who is he?—What?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Hush!—I attend you, sir;
Be seated—Ashdale, leave us.

[NORMAN places his cloak and hat on a table and draws
a seat near to LADY ARUNDEL.

ASHDALE (*carelessly*).

By my troth,
I have no wish to mar good company.
Fair sir, I owe you back disdainful words
Repaid you later.

NORMAN (*aside*).

I love that warm spirit!—
'Twas mine at *his* age—my dear brother!

ASHDALE (*going to the table and exchanging the cloak and hat*).

Ho!
The signal plume—a fair exchange,—so please you,
The cloak too. Tarry now as long as lists you;
I'll be your likeness elsewhere.

[*Exit.*

NORMAN.

How to break it—
And not to give overwrought joy the shock
Of grief—

LADY ARUNDEL.

I listen, sir.

NORMAN (*with great emotion*).

You love your son ?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Better than life, I love him !

NORMAN.

Have you not
Another son—a first-born ?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Sir !

NORMAN.

A son
On whom those eyes dwelt first, whose infant cry
Struck first on that divine and holy chord,
In the deep heart of woman, which awakes
All nature's tenderest music ? Turn not from me.
I know the secret of thy mournful life.
Will it displease thee—will it—to believe
That son is living still ?

LADY ARUNDEL.

How, sir—such licence ?
I will not brook it !

[*Rises to go.*]

NORMAN.

No, thou wilt not leave me !
I say, thou wilt not leave me ! On my knees,
I say thou *shalt* not leave me !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Loose thine hold,
Or I will call my menials, to chastise
This most unmanner'd freedom !

NORMAN.

Mother, mother !
I am thy son—thine Arthur—thine own child !
Do you deny your own ?

LADY ARUNDEL.

I have no son,
Save Percy Ashdale!

NORMAN.

Do not—do not hear her,
Thou everlasting and all-righteous Judge!
Thou, who, amidst the seraph hosts of heaven,
Dost take no holier name than that of "Father!"
Hush, hush! Behold these proofs—the deed of marriage!
The attesting oaths of them who witness'd, and
Of him who sanctified, thy nuptial vow!
Behold these letters?—see, the words are still
By years unfaded!—to my sire, your lover!
Read how you loved him then. By all that love—
Yea, by himself, the wrong'd and murder'd one,
Who hears thee now above—by these, my mother,
Do not reject thy son!

LADY ARUNDEL.

The worst is past.

[Re-seats herself.]

And were this so—own that I had a son—
What proof that you are he?

NORMAN.

What proof? There, there!
In your own heart—your eyes—that dare not face me;
Your trembling limbs—there—there my witness! Nature
Blanches your cheek, and heaves your struggling breast!
Thou know'st I am thy son!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh, while he speaks,
My courage melts away! And yet, my Percy,
My son, whose years blossom'd beneath my eyes—
All *his* hopes blasted! No, no!

NORMAN.

See—you falter!

Ah——

LADY ARUNDEL.

Sir, if you, a stranger till this day,

Have, by suborning most unworthy spies,
Glean'd from the tragic tale of my gone life
Some hints to build this wild and monstrous fable,
Go, seek the laws to weave them into shape
More cunning and less airy. Quit my presence !

NORMAN.

I will not !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Will not ? Ho, there !

NORMAN.

Call your hirelings ;

And let them hear me !

[*Goes to the hearth.*]

In these halls—upon
The sacred hearth—stone of my sires—beneath
Their knightly scutcheon—and before their forms,
Which, from the ghostly canvass, I invoke
To hail their son—I take my stand ! I claim
My rights ! They come—your menials ! bid them thrust
From his own hearth the heir of Arundel !

Enter Servants.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Seize on !—No ! no !—My father's lordly mien
Is his ! *I dare not !*

FIRST SERVANT.

Did you summon us,
My gracious lady ?

NORMAN.

Yes ! she summon'd ! Now,
Lady of Arundel, your mandates !

LADY ARUNDEL (*sinking into a seat*).

Leave us ;

We do not need you now !

[*Exeunt Servants.*]

LADY ARUNDEL (*rising, and hastily approaching*).

Oh, Arthur !—son !—

If so you be—have mercy !

NORMAN.

Do not kneel—

No, do not kneel—that, *my* place !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Listen to me.

Grant that you are my son—the unhappy pledge
Of a most mournful nuptials :—grant that I,
Scarce on the verge when child-born fancy glides
Into the dreaming youth, misplaced my heart—
Forgot the duties which the noble owe
The past and future :—that a deed was done
Which, told, would blacken with a murderer's crime
My father's memory—stain *thy* mother's name—
Bid the hot blush, rank in the vulgar eye,
Blister my cheek, and gnaw into my heart :—
Grant this—and you, my son ! will you return
The life I gave, for that, more vile than death,
The everlasting shame ? NOW, SPEAK !

NORMAN.

Go on !

Go on ! I cannot speak !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Heaven witness for me,

With what reluctant and remorseful soul,
After what threats endured and horrors done,
I yielded to my ruthless father's will,
And with false lips profaned a second vow !
I had a child ! I was a mother ! true :
But did I dare to dwell upon that thought ?
In darkness and in secret—if I sought
The couch it hallow'd—did not my steps creep
Fearful and shuddering as the tread of crime,
Which starts at its own shadow ? With that son
Were woven, not the proud, self-glorying joys
Which mothers know ; but memory, shame, the dread
And agony of those who live between
Evil and its detection. Yet I loved thee—
I loved thee once !

NORMAN.

I knew it—Heaven, I knew it !

LADY ARUNDEL.

I loved thee till another son was born—
One who, amidst the sad and desolate world,
Seem'd sent from Heaven by Mercy. Think, thou wert
Alien—afar—seen rarely—on strange love
Leaning for life ;—but this thrice—precious one
Smiled to my eyes—drew being from my breast—
Slept in my arms ;—the very tears I shed
Above my treasure were to men and angels
Alike such holy sweetness!—food, health, life,
It clung to me for all!—mother and child,
Each was the all to each!

NORMAN.

I am not jealous—
I weep with thee, my mother—see, I weep!
Oh, so much love, and has it naught to spare?

LADY ARUNDEL.

My boy grew up—my Percy. Looking on him,
Men prized his mother more. So fair and stately,
And the world deem'd to such bright hopes the heir.
I did not love thee *then*—for, like a cloud,
Thy dark thought hung between him and the future.
And so—

NORMAN.

Thou didst not—O the unnatural horror!—
Thou didst not—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Doom thee to the pirate?—No,
No—not so ruthless, Arthur. But design'd
To rear thee up in ignorance of thy rights—
A crime—'tis punish'd. So, my tale is done.
Reclaim thy rights—on me and on my son
Avenge thy father's wrongs and thine ;—I ask not
Mercy from thee—and from the hated earth
I pass for ever to the tomb, which hath
Even for shame a shelter!

NORMAN.

Oh, my mother!
You do not know the heart your words have pierced!

I—I—thy son—thine Arthur—I avenge ?
Never on thee. Live happy—love my brother—
Forget that I was born. Here, here—these proofs—
These—these (*giving the papers*). Oh, see you where the
words are blister'd
With my hot tears ? I wept—it was for joy :
I did not think of lands, of name, of birthright—
I did but think these arms should clasp a mother !
Now they are worthless—take them—you can deem not
How in my orphan youth my lonely heart
Pined for the love you will not give me !—Mother,
Put but thine arms around me—let me feel
Thy kisses on my brow ;— but once—but once !
Let me remember in the years to come
That I have lived to say “ A mother bless'd me ! ”

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh, could I speak—could I embrace him—all
My heart would gush forth in one passionate burst,
And I should bid him stay ; and—Percy, Percy,
My love for thee has made me less than human !

NORMAN.

She turns away—she will not bless the outcast !
She trembles with a fear that I should shame her !
Farewell—farewell for ever ! Peace be with thee—
Heaven soothe thy griefs, and make the happy son
Thou lovest so well the source of every solace.
For me (since it will please thee so to deem),
Think I am in my grave !—for never more,
Save in thy dreams, shalt thou behold me !—Mother,
For the last time I call thee so !—I—I
Cannot speak more—I—

[Rushes from the room.]

LADY ARUNDEL.

Arthur ! O, my son !
Come back, come back, my son !—my blessed son !
[Falls by the threshold.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Hall in the Castle of Arundel, as in the last Scene.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Gone—gone!—and here he stood, and bless'd the mother
Who did not bless her son!—Ah, Heaven forgive me!
These are the deeds in which I placed my safety,
Now won and worthless!—Oh, how human hearts
Do feed on fire, till, when the flame is slaked
Ashes alone are left!

Enter SIR MAURICE.—(Lady Arundel conceals the papers.)

SIR MAURICE.

Well, cousin, fear not:
All is arranged.—Ere cockcrow thou shalt be
Free of thy terrors!—old Sir Maurice still
Is good for something, eh?

LADY ARUNDEL.

What guilty thought
Speaks in thy ominous smile?

SIR MAURICE.

If thus you wrong me
I'm mute;—and yet thou know'st I live to serve thee.
I can secure thee all—glad days—calm nights:
But in this world there are such covetous knaves,
That, la you now,—I am ashamed to tell thee—
The rogue I have hired wants two thousand pieces
This very night to—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Silence!—I abhor
Thy crooked counsels—thy rapacious guile:—
I've been too long benighted, and pursued
Meteors for guides! Now the cloud rolls away,

And on my terror breaks the morning star.
I'll naught of thee !

SIR MAURICE.

Thou wilt not !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Miser, no !

Thy black and hideous guilt, out-darkening mine,
Had well nigh drowned my soul beneath a sea
Deeper than that to which thy trait'rous craft
Consign'd my first-born ! Quit these halls for ever,
And starve beside the chests whose every coin
At the Last Day shall in the Court of Heaven
Witness against thee, Judas !

SIR MAURICE.

Miser ! Judas !

I thank thee—no, to-morrow I will thank thee.
This crowns the cup of insult ! You and yours,
Your dull-soul'd father, and your lowborn lover—
Your coxcomb son—your veriest varlet, down
To the gross scullion, fattening on your offal—
All—all have broke their idiot jests on me—
Me, but for you the Lord of Arundel !
Yet all, at need, could fawn on old Sir Maurice—
Eke from his wits their poverty of brain—
And—plague upon this wrath !—thou art not worth it !
I leave these halls. When next we meet, proud dame,
Thy crest may be less lofty ! Miser ! Judas !

[*Exit.*

LADY ARUNDEL.

There's meaning in this frontless insolence :
“ When next we meet,” said he ; “ When next we meet ! ”
Broods he some new and deadlier mischief ?—Ha !
Time wanes—Within there !—

Enter Servant.

What's the hour ?

SERVANT.

The chime

Just told the quarter, Madam !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ah! so late?

Where is my son, Lord Ashdale?

SERVANT.

Left the castle

Some minutes since : his grooms and steeds preceded.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Whither?—

SERVANT.

I know not, Madam, but he bade me
Say, that he might return not ere the morning.

LADY ARUNDEL.

The morning!—now the danger glares upon me.
He has whisper'd Percy of the lovers' flight;
And they will meet—the brothers—meet as foes!
Quick—torches—quick—let every menial arm!
Quick—follow—lights here!—Heaven avert this woe—
Forgive the mother—Save, oh, save the sons!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*The exterior of a ruined Chapel—The tower of the Chapel, with
large Gothic doors, for the background.*

Night—the stage darkened.

GAUSSEN and Two Pirates.

GAUSSEN.

All our men posted?—

1ST PIRATE.

Ay, my Captain;—Luke,
With ten stout fellows, hid beneath the rock,
Will seize the boatmen when they run ashore.

GAUSSEN.

Good.

Enter LUKE.

LUKE.

We have nabb'd the rogues—four sailors and
A jolly chaplain—only one, their leader,
Cut his way through, and fled!

GAUSSEN.

A murrain on him!
It matters not—all done ere he can peach!

Enter SIR MAURICE.

SIR MAURICE.

That woman's taunts put me beside my temper;
But I am on the threshold of my greatness.
Sir Maurice Beevor shall be merged to-morrow
Into Lord Ashdale;—like a drop of water
Into a glass of aqua vitæ.

GAUSSEN.

Well, Knight!

You have the monies?

SIR MAURICE (*giving a bag*).

Little dears! you see them
Tuck'd up in bed and fast asleep—my heart aches
That such a happy and united family
Should be dispersed upon the world, and never
Come home again!—Poor things!—Now, prithee man,
Don't be so rough with them!—

GAUSSEN.

Since last we met
My scouts inform me that the dogs of law
Are on my track.—'Twere best when all is done
To put to sea.

SIR MAURICE.

Right, right.

GAUSSEN.

So bring the rest
Of the gold to-night;—one half-hour hence I reckon
My part o' the compact will be sign'd and seal'd.

VIOLET.

Thy voice sounds sharp and strange.
Ah, my heart fails me!

ASHDALE (*aside*).

Yet, I'd swear her Norman
Would have said just what I did.

LUKE.

In the chapel
The priest awaits—your boatmen in the creek
Behind yon rock.

ASHDALE.

Aha! the priest—stay, fellow,—
The priest—the chapel?—marriage, eh?

LUKE.

What else, sir?

ASHDALE.

What light in the chapel?

LUKE.

Only a dark lanthorn.

[*Exit.*]

ASHDALE.

All favours—this is luckier than I hoped for!
I see!—the marriage first—then flight! Decorous!
Sweet one, within!—hush!—come!

VIOLET.

Mine ear does mock me;
But terror plays sad tricks with the senses! Norman,
My frame may tremble, but my heart is brave—
For *that* can never doubt thee.

[*Exeunt ASHDALE and VIOLET through the doors of
the chapel.*]

Enter FALKNER (his sword drawn).

FALKNER (*in a whisper*).

Norman!—Captain!
I dare not call aloud.—None here?—these rascals—
Have they laid hands on Norman, too? Who comes?

Enter NORMAN.

NORMAN.

I see her not. What, Violet?

FALKNER.

Art thou Norman?

NORMAN.

Falkner!

FALKNER.

Some villany is in the wind!
Scarce landed, when a rude band swept upon us;
Thy boatmen seized—the priest too;—I alone,
With my good sword, open'd a path for flight,
And, hurrying to thee with the news—

[A shriek within the chapel.]

NORMAN.

That voice!

[Exit NORMAN within the chapel.]

FALKNER.

More sport!—egad, I feel at home to-night!

[Exit FALKNER after NORMAN.]

Enter LUKE.

LUKE.

Who spoke?—Avast there!—Sure I heard—

Enter LADY ARUNDEL and Servants, bearing torches, from the cave.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Look round!

They must be here—Violet has left the castle.

It is the hour!—Who skulks there?—seize him!

[Servants seize LUKE.]

Enter VIOLET from the chapel, and falls at LADY ARUNDEL's feet.

VIOLET.

Save me!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Girl, girl—what means this?—where is HE—my—Norman?

VIOLET.

Stir not—the spot is desecrate. Methinks
Witchcraft and Murder reign there!—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Ha!—I dare not
Set foot beyond that threshold.

VIOLET.

By mine honour—
Tho' thou wilt mock me—I do think to have seen
Two Normans by the altar!—

LADY ARUNDEL.

His dead father
Has left his grave!

VIOLET.

We crept through the dim aisles :
Sudden, a light—a form—a gleaming knife—
I shriek'd, and clung upon the murderous arm—
When, lo!—a second Norman :—on the floor
This lay—and there—avenging, stern, unearthly—
The other rose, gigantic, thro' the darkness!

FIRST SERVANT.

Help to our lady!—

LADY ARUNDEL (*waving him back*).

Sirs, I need ye not.
Fall back!—what more?

VIOLET.

I know no more—I fled,
Darkling and blind with supernatural horror,
Along the dismal aisles.—

(*After a pause.*)

Oh! mad—mad wretch!
Why rave I thus?—danger and murder near him!
In—in!—your lights—your swords!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Open the tomb,
And I will front the Dead One!

[*The chapel doors are thrown open—the torch-bearers enter*
—NORMAN discovered near an old Gothic tomb, his sword
drawn, standing before the body of GAUSSEN.

It is the spot
On which the bridegroom fell before my eyes—
And now he stands as if in life!

VIOLET.

O Norman!—

You live—you live!

NORMAN.

Lo, where the father bled
The son has slain the slaughterer!—

LORD ASHDALE and FALKNER advance.

ASHDALE.

Thou!—my mother!
Where is the saviour of my life?—The stranger?

NORMAN (*coming in front of the stage*).

Embrace thy son—hear him! I saved his life!

ASHDALE.

Yes, when the knife was at my throat, his hand
Palsied the caltiff blow. I had well nigh fallen
Into the pit myself had dug. Thy plume
Deceived the blade design'd for thee. Nay, mother,
I am unscathed.

LADY ARUNDEL.

He saved thee—He!

[*The Servants remove the body.*

LUKE.

Your Worships,
If we have sinn'd, it was Sir Maurice Beevor
Whose monies bribed our chief.—The Knight desired
The blood of both—your Lordship and the stranger.

LORD ASHDALE.

Can this be true?

LADY ARUNDEL.

I can believe it. Now
His dark designs are clear!

FAULKNER (*to LUKE*).

Our honest messmates—
Thou black-brow'd cutthroat—speak, where are they?—speak!
If a hair on their heads be hurt—

LUKE.

Our leader dead,
Our business done—your men are safe!

FAULKNER.

Lead on, then ;
Advance the torches—follow.

NORMAN.

All the menials—
Take all—(*aside*) no hireling witness to the conference,
The last on earth, between the son and mother !
[*The Servants place torches on the crags of the forest-ground,*
and exeunt with FAULKNER and LUKE.

Manent LADY ARUNDEL—LORD ASHDALE—NORMAN—VIOLET.

LADY ARUNDEL (*advancing towards the chapel*).

There rests what once was love, now dust! Perchance
The love still lives in heaven—and penitent prayer
The charm that spells the angels.
[*Enters and kneels by the old tomb.—The moon breaks forth.*

NORMAN.

Violet!

Wert thou deceived, too?

VIOLET.

Shame upon thee, cousin !

ASHDALE.

Fair stranger, stratagem in love all fair :—
Forgive my this day's forwardness—your hand—
'Tis well—you have saved my life ; do more—resign
With a good grace this lady—she is highborn,
Of our own house ;—too young to know her heart.
Your worth might make you noble ;—but as yet
You have your spurs to win. Resign the maid,
But take the dower thrice told.

NORMAN.

Name, fortune, lands,

A mother's love—and now the only heart
That clings to mine—all! he takes all!—the ewe-lamb!

ASHDALE.

Thy silence gives consent. Oh, Violet, hear me!
I have too far presumed on my high fortunes—
Woo'd thee too rashly. Pardon me: renounce
This stranger—brave, but of no fitting birth—
And stand amidst the noblest dames in England,
The first in state as beauty!

VIOLET.

Norman, Norman!
Why art thou mute?—why dost thou gaze upon me?—
Why rest thy arms gather'd above thy breast,
As if to ward me thence?

NORMAN.

Go, look upon him!
His form more fair than mine, his hopes more high.
I have lost faith in human love! When mothers
Forsake their sons, why not the maid her lover?

VIOLET.

Methinks you mock me. Hear me, thou, Lord Ashdale.
You ask my hand—you proffer wealth, pomp, power,
And he but toil and danger!

NORMAN.

Thou hast said it.

VIOLET.

Behold my choice! There, where he stands, my fate is!
Take me, Oh, take me, Norman! Woman's love,
Once given, may break the heart that holds—but never
Melts into air, save with her latest sigh.

NORMAN.

Faithful amidst the faithless! Hope again
Blooms through the desert. Hither, and let me hear
The music of one heart that answers mine!

ASHDALE.

It shall not be! Ignoble one! The life
Thou sav'dst is nothing without her!—the boon

Is cancell'd. To thy weapon—foot to foot—
Let valour win the prize !

NORMAN.

I will not harm thee.

ASHDALE.

Insolent boaster ! “ *Harm !* ”—what ! neither yield
Not yet defend ? What would'st thou ?

NORMAN.

What ? why, stab me
Here, in these arms, and I'll forgive thee ! Do it ;
And tell thy mother, when thy holiday blade
Was raised to smite, my warrior sword fell—thus !

ASHDALE.

Saints, give me patience !

LADY ARUNDEL (*advancing from the chapel*).

Ay, upon the stone
Where his bones sleep I have pray'd, and I have gain'd
The strength that is not of the world ! How, Percy ?
Thy sword drawn on thy—

NORMAN.

Hush ! I have kept thy secret !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Unhappy boy !

ASHDALE.

Why turn thine eyes from him
To me ? and straight again to him ?

LADY ARUNDEL.

Approach,
Percy, my son !—Lord Ashdale now no more—
Behold thy brother ! Ay, the conscience wrings
Out truth at last :—Thine elder, the sole heir
To this ill-fated house !

ASHDALE.

This is delirium !

LADY ARUNDEL.

It is not so, irreverent one ! Here, Arthur,
Into thy hands I do restore the proofs
That re-assert thy rights—my eldest born,
By long-conceal'd, but holiest wedlock with
Arthur Le Mesnil ! To his breast, my Percy !
There is none nobler !

NORMAN.

Wilt thou not, my brother ?

Whate'er is mine——

ASHDALE.

Is *thine*—And dost thou deem
That I will fawn, a beggar, on thy bounty ?
Lackey thy heels, and crawl for crumbs that fall
From the rich, bounteous, elder brother's board ?
Ha, ha ! I'd rather couch with the wild boar,
And starve on acorns, than the world should cry,
“See once proud Ashdale, the meek younger brother !”

LADY ARUNDEL.

Percy, my best-loved !

ASHDALE.

Mother, is it so ?
Say that thou didst but sport upon my pride ;
That thou wouldst try me ! Speak !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Alas, alas !

It is the truth !

ASHDALE.

All is unravell'd now !
I ask no proofs—thy looks suffice for proof !
I will not hear a tale, perhaps of shame !
So, a long farewell, mother !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Do not leave me !

Oh, do not leave me ! Think how I have loved thee !
How, for thy sake, I sinn'd against my soul,
And veil'd, and barr'd, and would have crush'd his rights.
All, all for thee !

VIOLET (*timidly*).

We are young—we love each other !
We do not want titles and gold, my Norman !

LADY ARUNDEL.

Say you forgive—and yet, what have *you* to pardon ?

ASHDALE.

Everything, madam. Had you shaped my youth
Unto the pauper lot which waits me now,
I had not nursed desires, and pamper'd wants,
Into a second nature : my good sword,
And my free heart, the genii of my fortunes.
Oh, thou hast wrong'd me foully !

NORMAN.

Shame, boy, shame !

Dost thou with ruthless and ungrateful taunts
Answer those agonizing tears ! Ah, mother,
I loved thee more than he does !—Thou repentest !
Thou tak'st her hand !—Forgive him !

(*Solemnly.*)

My dead father !

I never saw thee living ; but methinks
Thy presence fills my soul !—Poor trembling mourner !
If, as I feel, that low-born father loved thee
Not for thy gold and lands—from yonder grave
His spirit would chide the son who for such gauds
Would make the bond and pledge of the love he bore thee
A source of shame and sorrow—not of solace !—
Hear him then speak in me !—as lightly as
I, from this mantle, shake the glistening dew,
So my soul shakes off the unwholesome thoughts
Born of the cloud and earth.—

(*Goes to the torches.*)

Look ye—all dead !

My sire—the priest—all who attest my rights !
With a calm hand, unto this flame I yield
What rest, these scrolls !—and as the fire consumes them,
So wither all that henceforth can dismay
Or haunt thy heart, my mother !—

ASHDALE.

Hold—hold—no !

I am not so base—'twas but a moment's weakness.
Hail the true heir!

(Falling on his breast.)

My brother—oh, my brother!

NORMAN.

A mother and a brother, both!—O joy!

LADY ARUNDEL.

My children in each other's arms!—

ASHDALE.

Now summon

All friends, and let them know the rightful heir.

LADY ARUNDEL.

True—be the justice done—an awful tale:
But ye shall hear me speak it. *(falteringly)* My poor Percy!
My father's crime too—well—

NORMAN.

You mark her, brother.

Shall we bring this upon her?—

[Holding the papers over the torches till they are consumed.]

It is past!

Now, never more a bar betwixt *your* hearts
And mine—ah, mother! *now* thine arms embrace me—
Now thy kiss melts into my soul!—

LADY ARUNDEL.

Oh, bless thee!—

NORMAN.

Hark! she has blessed her son—I bid ye witness,
Ye listening Heavens—thou circumambient air:
The ocean sighs it back—and with the murmur
Rustle the happy leaves. All nature breathes
Aloud—aloft—to the Great Parent's ear,
The blessing of the mother on her child.

ASHDALE.

How nobler this than our nobility!

NORMAN.

Each to his element!—the land has form'd
Thy nature as the hardy ocean mine.
It is no sacrifice. By men and angels!

Better one laurel-leaf the brave hand gathers
 Than all the diadems pluck'd from dead men's brows—
 So speaks my father's son!—Were there before us
 All—all who in this busy and vast mart
 Of merchant traffickers—this land of England—
 Worship the yellow god—how one great truth
 Should shake the sceptred Mammon on his throne!
 Here, in our souls, we treasure up the wealth
 Fraud cannot filch, nor waste destroy;—the more
 'Tis spent, the more we have;—the sweet affections—
 The heart's religion—the diviner instincts
 Of what we *shall* be when the world is dust!
 Is it so, Violet?

VIOLET.

I never loved thee—
 No, never—till this hour! A moment since,
 When thou wert what the wrong world calls more great,
 Methought thou wert less Norman!

ASHDALE.

It must *not* be.
 Fire cannot quench thy claims—at least together
 We'll live, and share alike.

NORMAN.

Thou shalt find vent
 For generous thoughts. Give me what dower thou wilt
 With Violet, if ungrieving thou canst yield
 That priceless treasure to me now, my brother!

LADY ARUNDEL.

The dower shall halve the heritage.

ASHDALE.

Sweet cousin,
 Forgive me!—All the heat of my wild will
 Melts in the light of that bright soul,—and never
 Did knight upon the hand of some fair queen
 Press lips of holier and more loyal homage,
 Than this pure kiss which hails a brother's bride.

Enter SIR MAURICE (with a bag).

SIR MAURICE.

All done ere this!—My patent is made out.

Ugh! but the fees are heavy!—Ha, these torches!
Confusion!—(*drops the bag.*)

ASHDALE.

Knave, thy hireling is no more!
'Take up thy bribe!

LADY ARUNDEL.

Was it for this, base ingrate,
Thou didst ask gold?—a double murder!

SIR MAURICE.

Hush!

He'll hear.

LADY ARUNDEL.

Begone!

SIR MAURICE (*clinging to LORD ASHDALE*).

'Twas meant in kindness, Hotspur.

ASHDALE.

Off, or I spurn thee, hang-dog!

SIR MAURICE.

Spurn me!—Thou
Shalt live to crawl to me for pence!—All hail,
Arthur, the heir of Arundel!—thy claims—

NORMAN.

Are naught.

SIR MAURICE.

How?—but the proofs—

NORMAN.

No proofs, but of thy guilt!

SIR MAURICE.

O, wrong'd young man!

[*NORMAN points significantly to the torches.*

I see it—I'm robb'd and murder'd!

NORMAN.

Hence! and be mute on what concerns thee not—
Or——But I will not threaten thy grey hairs.—
Hence, and repent!

SIR MAURICE.

I thank you kindly, sir:

I am a very poor old Knight!—My Lord,
Your very humble cousin!—To my grave
A sordid, spat-upon, revengeless, worthless,
And rascally poor cousin!—Yes, I'll go
Bury my monies—hang myself—and make
The parish pay the funeral!—Ugh!—I'll spite them!

[Exit.

Enter FALKNER, Chaplain, Sailors, etc.

FALKNER.

Captain—the priest—and now the ship's in sight—
Wind and tide serve.

LADY ARUNDEL.

I cannot part from thee,
My long-lost—my beloved!

NORMAN.

We will not part!
Violet the link that binds me to thy hearth,
And makes thy love (tho' secret, the true cause)
Not in the world's eye strange;—we will not part
Till the first moon of wedded love be o'er;
And then, if glory call me to the seas,
Thine eyes shall lure me back from year to year.

LADY ARUNDEL.

If ever thou repent'st—

ASHDALE.

The half I hold
Thine with the birthright.

NORMAN.

Nay, your love my birthright;
And for the rest, who can aspire to more
Than a true heart for ever blent with his—
Blessings when absent—welcome when return'd;—
His merry bark with England's flag to crown her,
Fame for his hopes, and woman in his cares?

THE END.



MAR 9 - 1960



